

A
FRIENDLY TRIALL
OF THE GROUNDS
TENDING TO
SEPARATION;

In a plain and modest Dispute touching the
Lawfulnesse of a stinted Liturgie and set
form of Prayer, Communion in
mixed assemblies, and the Primi-
tive subject and first recepta-
cle of the power of
the Keyes:

*Tending to satisfie the doubtfull, recall the wan-
dring, and to strengthen the weak :*

By
JOHN BALL.



ISAIAH 8. 20.

*To the law and to the testimonie : if they speak not according
to this word, it is because there is no light in them.*

PSAL. 119. 105.

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

¶ Printed by Roger Daniel printer to the
Universitie of Cambridge;

For Edward Brewster, and are to be sold at his shop
at the Bible on Fleet-bridge. 1640.

TRIED BY MAIL
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SEP 24 1897

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*To the Christian Reader, sound judgement, the
spirit of wisdom, uprightnesse of heart, and sweet
communion with GOD.*

Christian **READER,**

IT is commonly professed, though not so well known and observed as it ought, that Satan is alwayes busie to sollicite, and our own deceitfull hearts ready to turn aside from the wayes of peace and comfort, either to the right hand or to the left. To say nothing of the lamentable state of heathen Infidels, Turks, and Jews, who know not God, nor believe the Gospel of **JESUS CHRIST**; Amongst them that professe Christianity, some are so deeply plunged into superstition, that the truth of God and the ordinances of grace are not prized in comparison of their own vain and fruitlesse traditions. And others, on the contrary, do so farre distast all

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inventions whatsoever (as they speak) in Gods worship, as they reject that which beareth the stamp and image of God, and might be greatly profitable to their souls. Many come profanely to the Lords table, and pollute the holy things of God to their own destruction: Others, through groundlesse fears of defilement, do withdraw themselves from ordinances Divine, and the society of the godly, because some unworthy are not debarred. To satisfie this latter sort, who offend out of weaknesse & misguided judgement not of stubbornesse and contempt, and to settle them that are staggering, I have penned this poore & rude treatise, nothing doubting but the truth will be able to maintein it self, and that the beauty thereof will procure favour and acceptance, though it come arrayed in a very homely garment.

A stinted form of prayer hath been challenged as an image forbidden in the second commandment, a forged and devised worship, unlawfull both in them that use it, and those

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those that joyn therein. To remove this scruple, I have shewed the use of a stinted Liturgie, lawfull and allowable by the word of God, of ancient use in the churches of Christ, approved by all reformed churches at this day: Upon which occasion many things are disputed touching the meaning of the second commandment, the nature of true and false worship; and what it is to pray by the Spirit.

Many are the objections which are made against set forms of prayer, and particularly against our book of common prayer: all which I have endeavoured to answer severally; and not because they are of so great weight, but because I desired fully to satisfie every doubt, and roll away every stone I met withall. If one and the same thing be oft repeated, I desire it may be considered that one and the same objection for substance is often brought forth, though perhaps in new aray, and every plain-hearted Reader (for whose use I principally intend

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this labour) is not able to apply an answer once given to sundry objections in colour diverse though for substance the same. And I suppose the prudent will think it more reasonable that the wise in heart be burdened with over-much, then that the weak should remain unsatisfied through some defect. Some stagger at this, that ignorant, profane, notorious offenders are admitted to the Lords table, and conceive that communicating with such in the ordinances of religion they are partakers of their sinne. And sure it is a thing to be lamented with tears of blood, that the body and blood of our Saviour CHRIST should be profaned, the house and church of God defiled, the name of the Lord dishonoured, religion blasphemed, and the blind, notorious, profane permitted to rush upon their own perdition. But it is not for private persons to take that upon them which belongeth not unto their place; nor, being invited by
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CHRIST, to excommunicate themselves, because such as are notoriously wicked be not admonished, kept back, or censured.

The main ground of the former doubt and all others tending to Separation seemeth to be this; That the power of the keyes is primitively given to the community of the faithfull, as the first receptacle. For then they conceive that it pertaineth to them to censure offenders, or else to separate from them. Then likewise it will more probably be concluded, as they think, That that society which hath not the power of CHRIST'S keyes is not the true church of CHRIST. Therefore to raze the foundation of Separation, and at once to overthrow their main objections, this question is more largely disputed: wherein is shewed by evidence of Scripture, That the power of the keyes is given by Jesus Christ, the Lord and King of his church, and great Shepherd of his sheep, to the church-governours whom he hath appointed to rule and feed

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feed his flock in his name, and to whom they must give account.

If any man shall think these things are small and not to be insisted upon, he may please to consider; How small soever the things in themselves seem to be, the evil consequences that follow thereupon be both many and great: It is no small matter to bury that under the condemnation of false worship, which the Lord the authour of all truth, the determiner of his true, pleasing and acceptable worship, doth allow in his service. It is no small offense to forsake the prayers of the congregation, to depart from the table of the Lord when he calleth to feast with himself, and to break off society and communion with the churches of Christ, where he doth cause his flock to rest at noon; to fill the hearts of weak Christians with doubts and distractions, as not knowing what to do, or which way to take; to spend time in reasonings and disputations of this kind, which

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which might much more profitably be employed in the practice of repentance and holy obedience : to expose religion to contempt, and the truth of God to reproch, amongst them that delight to speak evil: These are sad effects of this Separation which is here opposed. Is it not lamentable to see poore Christians, who sincerely thirst after the waters of life, and long to meet the Lord in his holy ordinances, cast into doubts and fears about the things which so nearly concern their comfortable walking with God and salvation of their souls? May not this tend to the discouragement of divers that are coming on, and turn them who are halting clean out of the way? The rents and divisions which have been in the church have evermore been one advantage which the enemies of the truth have taken to speak reprochfully. And if the credit of religion, the glory of God, and the souls of our brethren be dear unto us, what can we do lesse then by a just
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and mild defense of the truth seek the reclaiming of such as are gone astray, the establishing of them that be weak in judgement but zealously affected to the wayes of God; stop the stream of seducing, free the godly from unjust imputations, and settle peace and unitie in the truth amongst brethren? I heartily wish we had not so much experience to lesson us, that when men have once begun to neglect the publick exercises of religion, and to separate from the churches of Christ, they have run from one errour into another after the fond imaginations of their own seduced hearts untill they have dashed themselves upon the rocks.

They that break off communion in the particulars mentioned, have not proceeded to a totall Separation from our congregations and assemblies, as no churches of Jesus Christ: This rigid Separation they condemn, as that which was never approved or blessed of God. But they have gone further then the
word

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word of truth doth warrant them, or they have the Lord Jesus for their guide: whereas it is the duty and safety of Christians to follow after but not to go before their Lord and Captain. The first entrance into an erroneous way is dangerous: for in the track thereof there is no stop, unlesse God of his infinite mercy do prevent. Errours are lapped up together in a bundle, and many times the least onely appear, which yet serve to bring on and usher in the greater. At once men fall not into strange and monstrous opinions, no more then into outragious evils: but by degrees they insensibly are drawn from bad to worse, untill they come to a great height. At the first sight many a mans conscience would have been affrighted with that error which after some tampering he highly admireth and is bewitched withall. How many of great hopes and excellent parts have been overthrown hereby, is too evident by lamentable observation in all

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ages. Rents and divisions are the disease, Separation the wound of the church, unto which of long time she hath been obnoxious; but it is the sinne of them who either lay stumbling-blocks of offense before their brethren, or separate rashly or unjustly, being carried away rather with prejudice then strength of argument, and commanded more by the examples of others then by the authority of the rule of righteousness. There is but one body, the Church; and but one Lord, or head of the body, Christ: And whosoever separateth from the body the Church, separateth from Christ in that respect. And if we withdraw our selves from Christ where he graciously inviteth us to feast with him, may we not justly fear that he will withdraw himself from us, and make us seek, when we shall not find him? Voluntary Separation from the Lords table and prayers of the congregation, what is it but a willing excommunication of our selves from the visible tokens of the Lords
presence

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presence and love? And if it be a grievous sinne in church-governours, to deprive any member of the church of all communion with the visible church upon light and unnecessary occasions; is it not a greater sinne in the members, to deprive themselves of the same communion upon the like or lesse occasions? Zeal and tenderesse of conscience must be nourished by all good means; but they are not to move alone without their guide, that is, the word of God.

Perhaps this kind of writing may occasion more disputes. If so, it is contrary to my hearts desire, who intend onely the satisfaction of them that stagger, the reclaiming of them that are gone too farre, and the maintenance of peace, truth, and communion in the worship of God, as it furthereth communion with Jesus Christ. If I may obtain this end, I have that which I beg of the Lord. VVillingly I would not offend any that fear God, but endeavour onely to remove the
blocks

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blocks at which I see some stumble, and to further the more comfortable walking of others, who desire to please God in all things, but are kept under in the means of comfort with vain scruples. And happy were it, if, doubtfull disputations laid aside, we might joyn together with one heart and soul to advance religion, worship the Lord purely, edifie one another in our most holy faith, and walk unblameably in the fear of God and comfort of the holy Ghost. I take no pleasure in controversies of this kind, and could heartily wish that, these matters rightly composed, we might give heed to that one thing which is necessary: But if it seem good to any man to reply, I earnestly beg that he would take the word of God truly understood for his warrant, make proof of what he saith, keep himself to the points in hand without impertinent digressions, and proceed on in love and meeknesse, as becometh them that professe the truth, and desire to preserve the

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the peace of a good conscience. A good cause is no way advantaged by heat and passion. We must so write and speak in controversies of religion, as that we remember we must give account to God of that which we say. And if passionate and distempered speeches in common talk be no light offense; in matters of religion, which are soberly to be debated as in the presence of God, to give way to humane rashnesse and distemper is much more disgracefull. God will not hold him guiltlesse that telleth a lie for the glory of his name. To bear false witness in civill contentions betwixt man and man, is odious and abominable: Therefore it behooveth us to fear and stand in aw, lest being transported with misguided zeal we call evil good and good evil, and misapply the scriptures, when we speak of our selves. Let us weigh all things, and hold that which is good. The Lord in mercy look down from heaven upon his poore church and people, bring his truth

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to light more and more, dispell the mists of ignorance, remove all occasions of offense, settle peace and truth, prosper the means of grace, build us forward in faith and holiness, and unite the hearts of his people in love, that they may direct their course by one rule (if they cannot be all of one mind in every thing) and as one man may walk together in heaven-way, untill they receive the end of their faith, the salvation of their souls.



CHAP. I.

Of a stinted form of Prayer.

Payer is the sweet and familiar conference of a faithfull soul with the Lord his mercifull Father: Or, A calling upon God in the name of Christ with the heart, and sometimes with the voice, according to his will, for our selves and others. In it (to let passe other matters not pertinent to this purpose) foure things come to be considered: the Subject recipient, Authour, Matter, and Manner thereof. The honour of invocation is due to God onely in and through Jesus Christ: To God onely, as the chief, best and most perfect good; through Christ, as our Mediatour, in whom we have acceſſe to the throne of grace. Prayer is not a work of nature but of grace. The principall authour thereof is the holy Ghost. Man indeed doth poure out his soul unto the Lord, but he is first taught, moved, and enabled thereunto by the Spirit of grace; so that prayer is Gods gift, and mans act. The matter of our prayer is diverse, according to the sundry occasions which happen in this life; but ever it must be agreeable to the word and will of God. Understanding,
C faith,

Pſal. 50. 15.

1. Tim. 2. 5.

John 10. 23.

Ephes. 2. 18.

Rom. 8. 26.

1. Cor. 14. 16,
28. Orig. contra
Celsum, lib. 8.
Ambr. in 1 Cor.
14. Hieron. ad
Heliodor. Epi-
taph. Nepotian.
August. De Ma-
gist. lib. 1 Idem,
De catechiz.
rudib. cap. 9.
Justinian. De
Ecclesiast. di-
vers. capitul.
Constit. 123.
Concil. Late-
ran. sub Innoc.
III. c. 9. In-
noc. III. Ex-
travag. de of-
fic. Judic. ordi-
nar. Quoniam
in plerisq; De-
cret. Gregor.
l. r. tit. 31. cap.
12.

faith, humilitie, reverence, fervencie, holinesse and love are required to that prayer which is acceptable unto God, and doth procure audience. In prayer with others, especially in publick prayer, where the minister is the mouth of the people, the use of the voice is necessarie for the edification of the hearers: for they cannot joyn in supplication, and yield their consent unlesse they heare and understand what is prayed for. In solitary prayer the voice and words are very usefull, but not necessary: usefull, to stirre up affection and prevent rovings; not necessary, because it is the soul only that doth animate prayer. A man may pray fervently and speak never a word: but words be of no worth if the heart be absent. Prayer endited by the Spirit and poured out by a sanctified soul is ever sweet and pleasant melodie in the eares of God, though the tongue keep silence, and the phrase of speech be rough and unpolished: But let the outward frame of words be never so smooth and well set together, the prayer is not pleasing unto God if therein we crave things unlawfull and impertinent, if it be read or uttered without intention of heart, understanding, faith, &c. Nevertheless, in prayer with others, specially in the publick assemblie, words and decent phrase must not be neglected; because all things must be done gravely and to edification. To place devotion in words, is superstition; to hunt after quaint terms, is foolish vanity; but to neglect a decent and comely manner of speech, is barbarousnesse.

barousnesse. Seeing then the use of the voice is not of the essence of prayer, no man of understanding will deny that to be an holy and acceptable prayer which proceedeth from a sincere and upright heart, feeling its own or others wants, and craving supply thereof according to Gods will, whether the petitions be put up in the self-same or in other words. And yet because the ordinances of God must be kept from contempt, in the publick assembly it is good neither to be over-neat, nor over-homely, but to use such a mean as doth most tend to the glory of God and good of Gods people.

Matth. 26. 44.

Here a question is moved, Whether a stinted Liturgie or set form of prayer, publick or private, be lawfull in the deviser or user?

A penned or stinted prayer I call Prayer in respect of the matter and externall form (because the matter is delivered in form of a prayer or supplication tendred to God) though properly it is not a prayer as it is penned or printed, but as it is rehearsed as our prayer with understanding, feeling of our wants, humilitie, confidence, &c.

The controversie is not of this or that prescript form in particular, much lesse of one faulty or erroneous, but of a prescript form in generall; Whether it be lawfull, especially in the publick assembly, to appoint any prescript or set form of prayer, though for matter never so sound and allowable. For if the exception be against this or that form in respect of the matter or maner of

imposing, then the question should be, Whether this prayer for matter or manner of imposing be erroneous; not, Whether a stinted form of prayer or Liturgie be lawfull. It is not questioned, whether a man may ask things unlawfull or impertinent in prayer: for the matter of our prayer must be agreeable to the word of God and our present occasions. A prayer for matter and externall form holy and fit, may by accident be sinfull in the user; *viz.* when it is repeated without understanding or intention of the heart. Of this there is no doubt. It is granted also, that no one prescript and stinted form of prayer or Liturgie is simply necessary, either in publick or private: for then our Saviour Christ, who would not be wanting to his church in things necessarie, would by his Apostles expressly have set down one to be an exact and unchangeable rule to all Christians and churches to the worlds end, both for matter and form, words and method, whereunto they should have been tied, and that alwayes. But seeing our Saviour hath commanded no such unchangeable form, it is not the Necessity, but the Lawfulnessse of a stinted Liturgie or set form of prayer that is pleaded for; and that as a matter of order, not of religion or substantiall means of worship. For in this sense, there is no means of worship expedient which is not necessary by commandment. It was never held, that a man should so tie himself or be tied alwayes to a set form without variation, that he should never offer

offer up any prayer unto God, as occasion is offered, and necessitie requireth, but what he findeth in his book. Such use of a set and stinted form of prayer we do not acknowledge nor seek to perswade: But to reade prayer as a prayer upon a book, or to make known unto God the desires of our heart in a set form of words devised by others or our selves, when the things we beg are allowable, fit and necessary, and when it is done with right affection, is contrary to no precept or commandment directly or by lawfull consequence.

Amongst them that oppose a set form of prayer we may observe differences in opinion. The ancient brethren of the Separation (as Mr Smith calleth them for distinction) condemn all stinted forms of prayer to be used as a prayer. Thus they dispute against set or stinted forms of prayer, that it is *a devise of man, an Idole-prayer, a stinting of the Spirit, the substituting of a book in the room and stead of the holy Ghost, a drawing nigh to God with the lips, when the heart is removed farre from him: That if set forms be lawfull, then one may make anothers prayer, buy his prayers at a book-binders shop, carry them about in his pocket, with many the like.* Which arguments, whatsoever their weight be, strike at all set forms, and not at this or that onely, prescribed in this or that manner. Mr Robinson hideth the matter as much, as well he may, by such like additions as these of matter and manner. *The*

Greenw. Against Giff. pag. 8,9. *I onely laboured to shew all men this error of reading mens writings instead of praying, that they might learn how to converse, &c.* Smith, Differences of the Separation. Epist. John. Against Carpenter. *They communicate together in a false and idolatrous outward worship of God, which is polluted with the writings of men, viz. stinted prayers, homilies, catechismes, &c.*

Robinson, A-
gainst Bern.
pag. 456.

The stinting,
imposing mens
writings upon
publick assem-
blies, to have
them read over
by number and
stint, or any o-
ther way, as a
worship of God
instead of true
invocation, is a
mere device of
man, and so car-
nall worship; as
also all other
reading of mens
writings, pub-
lickly or pri-
vately in this
abuse, for pray-
ing to God,
Greenw. An-
swer to Gifford.
Robinson, Ju-
stif. against
Bern. pag. 424.
Idem, pag. 419.
Idem, pag. 473.

Idem, pag. 425.

prove, is, That your Divine service-book framed by man, and by man imposed to be used without addition or alteration, as the solemn worship of your church, is that true and spirituall manner of worshipping God which he hath appointed. Again, That these stinted and devised forms do quench the spirit of prayer which God would have them use, stinting the minister, yea all the ministers of the kingdome, to the same measure of the spirit, not onely one with another, but all of them with him that is dead and rotten: and so stinting the spirit, which the Lord giveth to his ministers for his church, and that so strictly, as till the stint be out, it may not suggest one thought or word otherwise, or when it is out, one more then is prescribed. Neverthelesse his drift is, plainly to disprove all stinted forms, as it is evident by that he writeth in answer to some objections. For, Grant, saith he, that these words of Christ, PRAY AFTER THIS MANNER; AND VVHEN YE PRAY, SAY, are to be interpreted as these men would have it: yet do I except against their service-book in a double respect: The first is, That the reading of prayers upon a book hath no justification from them. If it be said, that to commit a certain form of words to memory, and from it to utter them, and to reade them upon a book, be all one; I deny the consequence: and though I approve not the former, yet is the latter farre worse. And in another place; You speak not properly, no nor truly, in saying, you Pray stinted prayers; for you Read them: and who will say Reading is Praying? or if you so say or do, is it agreeable either to his ordi-
nance

nance or common reason? And in the page cited last before, *He that readeth hath another speaking to him as it were, even him whose writing he readeth, and himself speaketh not to God but to the people.* Thus also he speaketh concerning the Lords prayer, *We may use a petition, two or more, or all, in or of it, even word for word, if so the holy Ghost (by whose immediate teachings and suggestions all our requests must be put up) do direct us, and that we apply the same words to our needs.* And in the same section, *So neither is the reading of this prescript, or repeating it by memory, praying.* Now let the indifferent consider and give sentence, whether this be not to condemn all set forms of prayer to be used as prayer. And if more then down-weight be required, his fourth reason against the stinted form of service in use in our church, will put this beyond all exception. For thus he disputeth; *As it were a ridiculous thing for a child, when he would ask of his father bread, fish, or any other thing he wanted, to reade it to him out of a paper: so it is for the children of God, especially for the ministers of the Gospell in their publick ministrations, to reade unto God their requests for their own and the churches wants out of a service-book, wherein they are also stinted to words and syllables.* So that all other respects and considerations laid aside, for what advantage soever alleadged, the simple use of a stinted Liturgie or form of prayer, to be used as a prayer, is disallowed of them. And if this be once accorded, the other respects will easily be wiped away, at least in regard of the
Pag. 472.
Id. pag. 473.
users

Copie of a letter,
pag. 5.

Pag. 5.

Pag. 13.

Pag. 21.

users and them that joyn in prayer and participation of the sacraments. In the copie of a letter lately published against stinted Liturgies, the Author willeth us to consider, *That the Liturgie he excepteth against was devised by men, viz. other men whom God hath not called to such a work as to invent forms of prayers which should be used by all the churches in the land for their prayers; and, That it is imposed upon the minister and the people of necessity; That it is stinted both in matter and words, to be used without variation; and, That the service is read out of a book many wayes faulty and corrupt.* But look to most of the reasons brought to shew the justnesse of this exception, and they make against all sorts of stinted forms used as prayers, and not against a form corrupt and faulty, imposed in such or such a manner: as namely these; *God did never command to use, nor promise to accept such a worship; in which respect it is the manifest breach of the second commandment. God hath appointed other helps for prayer, which are sufficient without this. Publick prayers offered up by the minister in church-assemblies must be framed according to the present and severall occasions of the church and people of God (as also mens private prayers ought to be ordered) which cannot be done when men are stinted to forms.* If you draw any conclusion from these premises, it must be, *That all stinted forms are unlawfull; not, That a form corrupt and faulty is to be disallowed.* But if the foresaid cautions be added by way of distinction or limitation, as if all stinted Liturgies were not disliked, but such
onely

onely as be imposed as necessary to be used without variation, and for matter or form corrupt and faulty; then the reasons fight directly with the conclusion, and hang no otherwise together then if a man should thus dispute; All stinted forms of prayer are not to be disliked, but corrupt onely, imposed as necessary; because God did never command, nor promise to accept any stinted service or devised worship. For what purpose therefore these cautions were added, let others judge; whether by way of aggravation onely, or to set the greater lustre upon the position, or for some other advantage. Some others professe, *That they oppose not all nor any set form simply as such; but are perswaded in many cases there is a lawfull use to be made of them: but such a set form as is prescribed amongst us for matter and manner they affirm to be against the second commandment, and a sin in the maker and deviser of it to such an use, and a sin in the user of it according to that devise or making.* But the lawfull use of such forms, publick or private, they allow onely in some case of necessity, which cannot fall out in a minister of the Gospel, or any man else who deserveth the name of a strong Christian. For they suppose abilities in all ministers, and in every man else who hath his wits exercised to discern good and evil, and deserveth to be esteemed a strong man in Jesus Christ. Their words be these; *Set forms have their proper place and lawfull use onely where abilities are not, as a naturall means and help to further some branch or other of that we call Prayer*

or conceived prayer, as to supply defect of invention, memory, utterance, or the like: So the lawfulness of it lieth onely in a case of some necessity. The difference then betwixt them, so farre as I can gather, standeth in this one thing, That these latter allow some lawfull use of a stinted private form of prayer in some cases of necessity, which the others altogether condemned. But whether they dissent in any other particulars or no, it is needlesse to enquire further, or whether the latter take away again what they seem to grant. In these things they consent: First, that all publick Liturgies and stinted forms of prayer be unlawfull, a breach of the second commandment both in the deviser and user. Secondly, that private forms of prayer, if lawfull for weak Christians and babes in Christ, are unlawfull for strong men in Christ, or Christians that have received some growth in godlinesse. Thirdly, that a Christian, weak or strong, may not lawfully be present at the prayers of the congregation read or rehearsed out of a stinted Liturgie, nor at the sacraments administred in a stinted form of Liturgie as it is with us. The Question then hath three branches: First, whether a set form of prayer, sound and pertinent for substance of matter, grave and simple for the order and manner, not prejudicing, abbridging or hindring by the length thereof the preaching of the word and prayer fitted to the speciall occasions, may in any sort be tolerated in the church, or read by the minister of the word in the publick assembly and

and congregation of Saints. Secondly, whether it be lawfull, specially for a strong Christian, to use a set form of prayer as prayer; or upon any occasion to reade as prayer a prayer upon a book. Thirdly, in case it should be unlawfull for the minister or master of the family to reade or use a prescript form of prayer, whether it should be unlawfull also for the people, children, or servants to be present at such assemblies where the said prayer is read or used. To these a fourth may be added, to prevent all exceptions, whether it be lawfull for a Christian to be present at that service which is read out of a book in somethings faulty either for matter or form. In the affirmative the assertion is, That a stinted Liturgie or form of prayer both publick and private is lawfull, and in some respects necessary, both in the congregation, family, and closet; That a minister godly, learned, and faithfull, may sometimes stand in need of the help of a publick Liturgie or stinted form of prayer in publick, and may make use of a stinted form at other times when it is not necessarie in respect of inability or indisposition; That though it should be unlawfull for the minister or governor of the family to use such stinted forms, yet may the people in the congregation and inferiours in the family be present at such prayers without sinne or scruple of conscience, yea though the prayers be read out of a book in somethings questionable for matter or form: So that voluntarie and willing Separation from

the prayers of the congregation and ordinances of worship for that cause onely, is sinfull in many respects. Thus I have laboured plainly to state the question, that I might neither be misled my self, nor lead others into any by-path, whiles they take their aim amisse. And these particulars I purpose to discusse in the fear of God, with the spirit of meeknesse, according to the scriptures; and trust by plain, sincere and upright dealing to make it evident that I seek nothing but the maintenance of the truth, the puritie of Gods worship, the increase and exercise of all holy gifts and graces in his servants, and the peace and comfort of his people.

CHAP. II.

All things essentiall to prayer may be observed in a prescript form.

THe two former points may be confirmed joyntly and severally by these reasons following. 1. That is a lawfull prayer wherein the desires of our hearts are lifted up or poured out unto God for Divine blessing according to his will, in the name of Jesus Christ, by the help of the Spirit of grace: But in a set or stinted form of prayer the desires of the heart may be lifted up or poured out unto God according to his will,

will, &c. Or, That form of prayer is just and lawfull, wherein all things essentiall to prayer, or necessarily required in the word of God, may be observed: But all things essentiall to prayer, or necessarily required in the word of God, may be observed in a prescript form or read prayer. What is required in holy prayer more then this, That the matter be allowable and fit; the manner holy, reverent, fervent and faithfull; our wants laid open, and petitions forced with as strong or stronger reasons and arguments then we are able of our selves to presse them with? And may not a prayer, holy and meet for the matter thereof, be read, or uttered with humility, feeling of our wants, earnestnesse of desire, holinesse of affection, and faith in Gods promises? In reading the scripture the eye doth lead the heart, and yet it may be read with judgement, reverence, meeknesse and joy: why may not the same affections be moved in a prescript form and read prayer? What necessitie is there that the heart and eye should be at variance in this duty, when they may be conjoyned in the other? Asaph and his brethren could praise God in a form of words set down by the prophet David: And if a prescript form of words may be allowed in Thanksgiving, which is one part of prayer, it cannot be condemned in Petition. The matter of our requests must fit the occasion; so must the matter of our thanks and praise: The Spirit of grace teacheth us to pray; and the same Spirit moveth us to return praise for benefits

Publick Prayer is not made with understanding and in faith, unlesse it be in a known tongue. Nor can a man pray in faith, and purely lift up his soul to God, who prayeth before or unto an Image.

Psal. 25. 1, 2.
Mark 11. 24,
25. Joh. 14. 13.
Jam. 5. 15.
Psal. 145. 18.

1. Chron. 16. 8.

1 Sam. 2. 7, 2.
Jon. 2. 1, 2.

1. Cor. 14. 15.

2. Chron. 6. 41.

42.

Psal. 132. 9.

2. Chron. 7. 6.

2. Chron. 20.

21, 22.

2. Chr. 20. 30.

Ezra 3. 10, 11.

1. Cor. 14. 15.

Ephes. 5. 19.

Col. 3. 16.

received: We must pray with the spirit; and we must praise with the heart. In the dedication of the temple Solomon used the very words of the psalme which David vowed to use at the bringing in of the Ark into his house. Jehoshaphat in that excellent thanksgiving which he made, appointed the priests and Levites to use a prescript form of words. So did Hezekiah, Zerubbabel and Jehoshua. And if we may sing psalmes with the spirit and with understanding, with feeling and joy of heart, as it is commanded, in a form of words stinted and prescribed, it cannot be thought a thing impossible, to pray with affection in a stinted and prescribed form. The differences which some put between Praying God with a psalme and Calling upon Gods name are little to the purpose, do not at all touch the force of the argument. For thus the reason standeth; In singing psalmes penned by the prophet David or other holy men of God, the eye doth lead the heart no lesse then it doth in a stinted form of prayer, and yet they may be sung after an holy manner with grace in the heart: therefore a stinted form of prayer may be read or said without book with that affection of heart which God requireth in prayer. And let the differences be as broad as they will in other things; in this they do agree. This reason may be drawn into another form, thus; Whatsoever hath the true matter and form of prayer, that is truly and properly a prayer. For where the true matter and form of a thing is found, there follow

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all necessarie requisites to the true and complete being thereof: But a prescript form of prayer, sound and fit for matter, grave for the manner of penning, and read or uttered as our prayer with knowledge, faith, reverence, and fervencie of affection, hath the true matter and form of prayer. For the matter of our prayers are, those common blessings and speciall good things which according to the will and pleasure of God we are to beg of him for our selves and others. The true form of prayer (I speak of prayer uttered with the voice) is the outward disposition and frame of words, and the inward elevation and lifting up of the heart to God by the holy Ghost. Will any man say, that all these things cannot be observed in a stinted form of prayer? common experience will confute him. Who knoweth not the matter of many prescript forms of prayer to be good and necessary for all men? All our wants and particular occasions are not mentioned or laid open in the prayers conceived by the minister or governour of the family; and yet no man judgeth them for that cause unlawfull, though imperfect. It is not then prejudiciall to the lawfull use of a prescript form, that many particulars which we stand in need of are not therein mentioned. Can it not be read or uttered with right disposition of heart? how then can we sing with joy, or praise God with cheerfulnesse in a stinted or set form

If in the administration of Baptisme no error be committed against the matter or form inward or outward, the worship it self or substantiall means of worship is approved of God and acceptable.

A man that readeth a form of prayer in a book, may be so affected with it, as in the desires of his heart to go along with it, and to use it for his present prayer. As it may thus fall out in reading one of Calvines prayers printed after his Lectures, or the like.

form of words. Is it not easier to cry for what we need with feeling, then to return praise with love and joyfulness for what we have obtained? He that will confesse it possible to give thanks aright in a set form of words devised by others or invented of himself, cannot deny the same in prayer with any shew of truth or colour of reason. *Men may read it (viz. the Lords prayer) and humane liturgies with understanding and feeling,* saith Mr Ainsworth. Again, If in the ordinary use of the Lords prayer, publick and private, without addition or variation, all things required in prayer by the word of God may be observed; then a stinted form of prayer may have the true matter and form of prayer, or all things required in prayer may be observed in a stinted form: But in the ordinary use of the Lords prayer, publick and private, without addition or variation, all things required in prayer by the word of God may be observed. For the matter, there is no word in the Lords prayer which doth not ordinarily in great measure, and in the main alwayes concern every Christian mans estate, though he cannot reach unto all things comprehended in this prayer. And all our wants are contained within the compasse of the Lords prayer, and may be deduced thence, though they be not in flat terms expressed. Infinite things are included in the Lords prayer, which the weak and imperfect faith of the godly cannot reach unto: but such and so much reach the weak faith hath, that the child of God doth
and

*Ainsworth,
touching the
use of the
Lords prayer.
See Mr Paget
his Arrow a-
gainst Separ.
chap. 3. pag. 63.*

*Coronidis vice
omnibus orati-
onibus oratio
Dominica ad-
jicienda, quæ
omnium rerum
precandarum
Epitome à Cy-
priano rectè
appellatur, He-
risbach. Oran-
di formula.*

and may with comfort and profit use the Lords prayer as a prayer. The Lords prayer is both the foundation of our godly prayers, and the prayer of prayers. Some weights and measures may be as rules to others, and used as weights and measures themselves. Concupiscence is both sin, and the cause of sin. Of ancient times the Lords prayer was used in all publick Liturgies, and was of frequent use among private Christians. Tertullian fitly calleth it, *The law of prayer, and breviary of the Gospel*: Calvine, *The rule*. That it may be used with right disposition and affection of soul, is confessed by them that dislike all stinted forms, and testified by the experience of all Christians: Therefore the Lords prayer may lawfully be used as a prayer, both in publick and private, by ministers and people, weak and strong.

post. lib. 7. cap. 25. Monentur Christiani omnes ter quolibet die orationem hanc fundere, Chemnit. Enam. par. 2. tit. De Can. Miss. & De Miss. Pontif. pag. 273.

But first we are willed to note, That the forms mentioned in scriptures of the old Testament are but for some speciall occasions, and commanded to the church, not from every ordinary church-officer, priests, and Levites, but onely from the Prophets, who had an extraordinary & immediate calling from God, & who might as well deliver for scripture-oracles the truth of God taught by them, as any forms of prayers and praises.

also plead, that God gave a law by Moses, therefore there may be a law given likewise by the Bishops, Answ. Against Bern. pag. 237.

Hierom affirmeth that Christ taught his Apostles to consecrate the sacrament of the Eucharist by the Lords prayer, Lib. 3. cont. Pelag. cap. 5. Greg. 1. 7. epist. 63 B. Rhen. in Tertull. De corona militis, Dominica oratio habetur in omnibus Liturgiis.

Cyprian De orat. Dom. & August. Enchirid. cap. 71. call it quotidianam.

In Constitut. A- orationem hanc

Object. 1.

Copy of a letter &c. pag. 5. How fond and corrupt is the reasoning of these men, from Gods example and authority unto their own practised power, &c. why do not these men law given like-

Answ.

This we have observed, and do acknowledge the forms of psalmes, prayers and praises given by the Prophets immediately called and chosen of God, to be parts of the sacred Canon, to which it is not lawfull for particular churches, or the whole church in generall, to adde the least jot or tittle. But this is not to the point in hand: For we do not reason thus, That seeing the Prophets by extraordinary and immediate calling gave speciall forms of prayer or praise to the church upon speciall occasion, which are parts of the Canon; therefore the church may do the like: But thus we conclude, and that according to the truth, That seeing holy men have prescribed and the faithfull have used these forms, not by extraordinary inspiration or speciall prerogative, but upon grounds common to them and us, the like forms may be prescribed and used without speciall commandment: And seeing the Prophets and holy men of God, by inspiration gave certain psalmes or forms of prayer and praise unto the church, to be used upon speciall occasion, which have the true matter and form of prayer and praise, when they be used as a prayer or thanksgiving, in faith, reverence, humility, &c. according to the present occasion; therefore prayer uttered in a stinted form of words, or read upon a book as a prayer, may come from the spirit, and be tendred to God with right affection. A man may reade when he prayeth, and the eye may guide the heart, when the holy Ghost doth lift up, and make it able to poure forth its desires unto

unto the Lord. And if those forms of prayers and praises which are parts of the scripture may have the true nature, matter, & form of prayer, &c. when they be used in faith, and by the power of the holy Ghost enabling us to pray or praise the Lord in that form; other forms of prayers or praises fit for matter, may have the true matter & form of prayer, or praise, when they be used in faith, by the power of the holy Ghost, as occasion requireth. For the prayers recorded in holy scripture, have not the true nature and form of prayer in respect of us because they are recorded in scripture, but as they are used by us in holy manner upon fitting occasion, and other forms fit for the matter, used in such manner as God commandeth, in faith, humility, reverence, &c. by the quickening power of the Spirit, have the true matter and form of prayer as well as they.

But those forms are not the devise of man, as *Object. 2.*
be the other.

True; as they be part of holy scripture they *Answ.*
are of God, both in respect of matter and form: but as they be applyed without speciall commandment to be the matter or form of a stinted prayer or thanksgiving at this time, they are the devise of man, that is, they are so applyed by man, without the extraordinary guidance & direction of the holy Ghost. Let us suppose a stinted form of Liturgie or prayer to be framed of the very words and sentences of scripture, wherein nothing is to be read by way of prayer, praise, exhortation, or declaration of the end and use of

the sacraments, but the very text of Scripture, if it be demanded whether this stinted Liturgie be the devise of man or no; I conceive our brethren will answer, That the matter and form both is of God, as they are parcells of holy writ; but as they are prescribed and used as a stinted form, it is the devise of man. This may be concluded from their grounds: for all stinted forms of prayer and administration to be used in the publick congregation, not commanded of God, be the devises of men, as they hold: But this foresaid stinted form is not commanded of God, as they affirm: Therefore it is the devise of men. There is now no form commanded of God, as they professe; and therefore to prescribe any text of scripture to be read in the administration of the sacraments, or the Lords prayer to be used as a prayer, is the devise of man. What is more constantly affirmed by them then this, That a stinted form of Liturgie is no necessary means of Gods worship; because in time of the Law God prescribed none to his people when they were in their minority. In times of the Gospel, our Saviour Christ, who would not be wanting to his church in the necessary means of worship, hath given no form to be used of all churches throughout the world, nor tyed any one member of the church precisely to this or that form of words in prayer, and none others. That we are not necessarily bound to the very words of the Lords prayer; because the Evangelists do not tie themselves to the same words, or

number

*Greenwood, A-
gainst Gifford
pag. 6. & 19.
Johnson, Qu.
de precib. &
lit. pag. 24, 25.
Robins. Justif.
against Bern.
pag. 470, 471,
472.
Copy of a Let-
ter, pag. 18.*

number of words, in recording that form of prayer; the Apostles did not bind themselves to those words, but used others according to their severall occasions; nor do we read in scripture that they laid any bond upon the churches to repeat over those very words. Though therefore the prayer it self was taught by Christ, the matter be of God, and the form, as it is canonicall scripture; and though it be left as a perfect and genuine rule of prayer: yet the application and use of it in such and such manner, at such or such times, in prayer, in respect of the words themselves, that is of men and not of God by particular institution. Thus the reason may be contracted briefly; the ordinary use of the Lords prayer without variation or addition is either commanded of God, and so necessary, or devised by men, and so free and arbitrarie; either it is a naturall help (as some speak) to supply some defect, or taken up upon free choice: But it is not commanded of God, it is not necessary *necessitate precepti* or *medii*, nor an help naturall to supply some defect: Therefore it is free and arbitrarie, as that which may be done onely; but it is not necessary to be done. This being observed, it will easily appear how little that distinction of using forms inspired by the holy Ghost, but not of forms devised by men, will avail: because there is no form at all prescribed by God, as they maintein. Secondly, if that distinction be granted, it is here impertinently alleadged, because it cannot be applied to any part of the reason. For forms of

Deut. 5. 29, 31, 33. & 12. 32.
Quod præcipitur, imperatur; quod imperatur, necesse est fieri, Tert. ad uxor. l. 2.
Ubi præceptum, necessitas est serviantis, Ibid.

Copie of a Letter, pag. 18.

prayer inspired by the holy Ghost, and recorded as parts of the sacred Canon, be not of necessary use for us because they are recorded, have not the true matter and form of prayer as they are there registred, but as they are put up in faith to God, being suitable to our occasions: and a devised form of prayer, fit for the matter, tendered unto God in holy affiance by the work of the holy Ghost, hath the true matter and form of prayer. God never gave commandment that all our petitions should be presented unto his Majesty in a form of words inspired by the holy Ghost immediately: God never disallowed the prayers of the faithfull, because the externall form or phrase of speech was devised by man. If the devised form of prayer before and after sermon be worship acceptable to God, because it is devised of him who is called of God to devise and endite it; then all men living are called and commanded to devise the worship of God, and not for themselves alone, but others in some cases: Then the forms of prayer publick or private, morning and evening: the forms of thanksgiving before and after meals, is devised worship, but acceptable for the foresaid reason. But that God hath called and authorized every man living, or all in the church, to devise a worship acceptable to his Majesty, is most strange. And so this first reason stands firm, That all things essentiall to prayer, or necessarily required in prayer by the word of God, may be observed in a stinted form devised by men.

CHAP. III.

*A stinted Liturgie or publick form of prayer
is no breach of the second commandment.*

THat which is the breach of no commandment, which is no where disallowed in the word of God either in expresse words or by necessary consequence, that is no sin: For sin is a transgression of the law; and where there is no law, there can be no sin. But a prescript form of prayer or Liturgie is the breach of no commandment, is no where disallowed in the word of God. The exposition of the commandments is to be found in the Prophets and Apostles; but the Lord by his Prophets and Apostles doth in no place restrain us to the use of conceived prayer, so to call it. Prayer is Gods ordinance, but whether our prayers be uttered in our own or others words, whether by pronouncing or reading, that is not appointed. God requireth that we lift up our hearts unto him, and ask of him in the name of Christ whatsoever we stand in need of and is agreeable to his will: But when spake he one word of praying within book or without, in this or that precise form of words? More particularly, a stinted form of prayer, for matter and externall form lawfull and pure, fit in respect of our occasions and the necessities of the church, read or uttered with knowledge, affiance and intention of heart, is not a breach of the second

2.

*Argument.*1. John 3. 4.
Gal. 3. 10.

All use of images is not condemned in the second commandment: for carving and cutting is the gift of God; and therefore a lawfull use thereof may be made, &c. Memorative signes or monuments of Gods mercies are not unlawfull. All images simply forbidden must not (as I conceive) be referred to that commandment, Deut. 4. 15. but images made to be worshipped, or ad cultum. And if the speciall and the generall be of the same common nature, not all inventions, but sained worship or service is forbidden.

second commandment either in the deviser or user. For if all stinted forms of publick prayer be a transgression of the second commandment, then in their common nature such stinted forms agree with images devised for worship: But stinted forms of prayer agree not in their common nature with images devised for worship. False worship forbidden in the second commandment is opposite to the true worship which must in speciall be instituted by God: But a stinted form of prayer is not opposite to that worship which must in speciall be instituted by God. False worship forbidden in the second commandment is in common nature, use and end one with that positive worship which is there commanded: But a stinted form of prayer is a matter of order, and not for common nature, use and end one with the true and pure worship of God there commanded. The pure worship of God in spirit and truth is set against the worship of images: But the pure worship of God in spirit and truth is not opposite to the worship of God in a stinted form of words. Against a generall negative commandment no speciall act affirmative is lawfull, unlesse the same be specially warranted by the Law-giver. But some stinted forms of prayer are lawfull which are not in speciall warranted by the Law-giver; viz. such as we have liberty to use, but are not tyed to use by any necessity of precept. If a publick stinted form of prayer be a breach of the second commandment, then all publick stinted forms whereof there is the same formall

formall reason and consideration, both for persons and things, are breaches of the second commandment at all times and in all men: (for it cannot be, that a perpetuall commandment should be interpreted to forbid an act to one man, when, if the formall reason and consideration be the same in all, it doth not forbid the same to every man.) But every publick stinted form of prayer whereof there is the same formall reason and consideration, is not a breach of the second commandment in all men and at all times. For there is the same formall reason and consideration of a publick stinted form of prayers to Christians now that there was formerly to the Jews: The same formall reason and consideration, I say, not of this or that particular rite or ordinance which did peculiarly agree to them in respect of the speciall manner of dispensation proper to those times; but of a stinted form in generall, which was proper to them in no consideration, but common to us with them. As for example, If the priests might blesse in a stinted form of words, the ministers of the Gospel may do so likewise; If the Levites might praise God in a stinted form of thanksgiving, the ministers of the Gospel may use the Lords prayer as a prayer without addition or variation. But all use of a stinted form of prayer and thanksgiving was not a breach of the second commandment in the priests and Levites. If a stinted arbitrary prayer be the breach of the second commandment, then is conceived prayer, when uttered, a sin likewise: For they both agree in the matter, as of God; in exter-

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Semper speciali-
alia generali-
bus insunt,
Pandect. lib.
50. tit. 17.
leg. 147.

nall phrase of speech and words, both are of men: in that which maketh stinted prayer a breach of the second commandment, if it be a breach, there is no difference. Therefore we conclude, That a stinted form of prayer is not a breach of the second commandment.

Object. 1.

See Copy of a Letter, pag. 5.

& 32.

Answer.

Means of Divine worship not ordained of God be unlawfull: But a stinted form of prayer is a means of Divine worship not ordained of God.

Means of worship (not to contend about words) are of two sorts. Some substantiall; which are so means of worship, as they be worship it self; as the word is used, when we speak of worship taught in the 2. commandment: So the sacraments are means of worship, & branches of positive worship taught in that precept. And in this sense all means of worship allowable are necessary by Divine precept, and we are bound in conscience to apply our selves to them as Gods ordinance, and not we onely, but all the churches throughout the world. For such ordinances of God pertain to the substance of worship, whereof nothing can be changed or taken away but the worship is changed, and another made. Others are mere accidents to the substantiall means, and deserve not to be called means of worship, and if so called, it is very improperly, concerning which God hath given no particular commandment in his word, whereunto the con-

See Calvin.

Inst. l. 4. c. 10.

§ 14, 30, 31.

Jun. Animad.

in Bellar.

contr. 3. l. 4.

cap. 16. not. 86,

87. & cap. 17. not. 3, 10, 11, 12.

Zinck. De Redempt. l. 1. De cult. 4. propos.

Cartwr. Answer. to the Rhem. Matth. 15. § 4. Whitak. De Pontif. Rom. Qu. 7. pag. 851.

852, 853. Calvin. opusc. De vera reform. & necessit. reformat. Calvin. Epist. 259.

Zeppar. De sacramentis, lib. 3. cap. 12, 13.

science

science is not bound either to apply it self unto them, or to witnesse against them : and of this sort are the circumstances of time, place, order, method, phrase and stinted form of words in the administration of the holy things of God ; which are no parts of the worship, but honest circumstances of the celebration ; consonant to the generall rules given in scripture for the right administration of Divine ordinances, but not commanded or disallowed in particular. For generall rules are not commandments of this or that in particular, but approbations of any particular, this or another, agreeable to those rules. The apostle in commanding that all things be done in order, doth not command this or that particular order, nor forbid this or that in particular because it is not ordained of God. For if all such means of worship shall be properly worship, then not onely preaching, but the church, pulpit, bells, bell-man, the phrase and method of sermons, then each particular form of prayer, the hower and order shall be worship, because they are furtherances thereof. If all such means of worship must be ordained of God, or they shall be unlawfull, God must have no worship at all from us, in the means which he himself hath ordained : because it is impossible to use the means he hath ordained, and not to do many things which he hath not instituted.

In times of persecution it is probable that the Deacon gave notice to the faithfull when and where the assembly was to be held, Ignat. ad Polycarp. & ad Hieron. or appointed it at the present assembly, Walafrid. De reb. eccles. c. 5.

But in times of peace, by the sound of a bell : which invention some attribute to Sabastian the Pope, anno Dom. 604. Polydor. Virg. de Invent. l. 6. cap. 12. Others to Paulinus Bishop of Nola, contemporarie to Hierome, because Hierome mentioneth this use. Hieron. De regul. monach. cap. 33. & 39.

Object. 2. Book-prayer is a manifest breach of the second commandment.

Answ.

*Smith, Differ.
chap. 6.*

The reason, I conceive, is, because words are signes of our conceits, and notes of the things themselves; writing is a signe or picture of the thing signified: and so words devised by men, and books of stinted prayers, are images or pictures of our own devising. And in this sense onely can a stinted prayer be called a devised worship. For the matter of the prayer is of God; it is the frame of words and method onely that can be challenged to be of man: and if devised words be not images condemned, I cannot comprehend how the externall form should be an apparent breach of the second commandment. But if this reason be ought worth, it is a manifest breach of the second commandment, to preach, pray, administer the sacraments, or reade the scriptures in a prescribed translation, nay in a vulgar tongue. For in preaching and prayer the matter is of God, holy and good; but the words and phrases, of men. In translations the matter is immediately inspired of God; but the words are devised of men. The sacraments are Gods ordinances by speciall and expresse institution: but what shall we say of the outward form of words used in the administration? If words devised by men be images condemned by the commandments, do we not make one commandment of God crosse to another, when we say that God requireth these things at our hands, and yet condemneth all devised words, without which they cannot be performed? Particular duties affirmative against
a gene-

a generall negative commandment must have expresse warrant by way of prerogative and derogation from the generall commandment, wherein we must not go one jot beyond signed commission: Thus Abraham was commanded to offer up his son Isaac, which otherwise had been against the sixth commandment: Thus the sacraments are commanded to the church, which for the church to devise of her self is against the second commandment; and therefore it is unlawfull to institute other sacraments then God hath appointed, or adde sacramentall signes to them which the Lord hath instituted. But to affirm the same of devised words in prayer, preaching, administration of the sacraments, and reading of the scriptures; *sc.* that they were instituted of God by particular warrant, and by speciall prerogative and derogation, would be exceeding strange. Signes religious then are of two sorts: 1. Vocall (if they may be called signes metaphysicall) under which I comprehend naturall gestures, as they are expressions of the inward affection; and these are not simply forbidden or commanded in the second commandment, nor do simply pertain to the second commandment, but to the precept rather which requireth the inward affection it self. 2. Reall, and such as in common nature, use and end be one with the positive ordinances of God; and these are the images forbidden in the second precept. And seeing for the affirmative part, positive worship, as it is to be approved, maintained and exercised purely according to the institution is the object of that com-

In toto jure generi per speciem derogatur; & illud potissimum habetur quod ad speciem directum est, *Pandect. lib. 50. tit. 17. leg. 80. Cypr. lib. 1. epist. 8.* Adulterum est, impium est, sacrilegum est, quodcumque humano furore instituitur, ut dispositio divina violetur *Ambr. in 1. Cor. 11.* Indignus est Domino qui aliter mysterium celebrat quam à Christo traditum est. Non enim potest devotus esse qui aliter presumit quam datum est ab Autore.

mandment, it seemeth that prayer, as it is directed unto God onely, in the mediation of Jesus, whether inward or outward, conceived in heart or declared by word or gesture, cannot be referred, as a branch of positive worship, to the second commandment. When men pray to idols or saints departed inwardly or outwardly, they sinne against the first commandment: If with carnall imaginations before an image, they break the second; if lightly, vainly, irreverently, with the lips alone, they sinne against the third: But the method, words or phrase of speech, as such, is neither condemned in the second commandment, nor doth belong unto it.

Object. 3.

*Johnson ubi
suprà, pag. 33.
Greenwood,
Against Gif-
ford. pag. 8. &
18.*

Ans.

Mens inventions in Gods worship are forbidden in the second commandment: But stinted prayer is the invention of man, never instituted nor approved of Christ in his Testament.

Must this go for currant without limitation, proof or explication, That all inventions of men in Gods worship are forbidden in the second commandment? What then shall we say to all devised words and phrases used in Gods service? What to all set forms of catechismes, studied sermons, interpretations of the scriptures, the contents of chapters, the titles of sundry books of scripture? What to the divisions of the into sections, chapters and verses, the interlineary glosses, divers readings, marginall references, the reading of one part this week, another the next? What of the building and ordering of synagogues for the sanctification of

*Jun. Animad.
in Bellarm.
contr. 5. l. 2.
cap. 16. not. 18.
Rivet. Catho-
lic. orth. tract.
2. qu. 37.*

of the sabbaths, the fashion of gathering for the repair of the temple in Joash his time, the swearing to the covenant under Asa, the ordination of holy feasts and fasts upon occasion: What of the forms and gestures used in oathes, of conceived prayer itself, of set forms of worship, studied before, and kept in memory, as some distinguish; in the same form and with like truth, we may argue against them; mens inventions in the worship of God are forbidden by the second commandment: But set forms of catechismes, studied sermons, interpreted

Humane inventions forbidden in the second commandment, are for common nature and use one with the positive worship of God, unlawfull because they be not in particular instituted and commanded of God:

and in that respect matters of order, method and phrase in themselves allowed and warranted, if done as parts of positive worship are in that respect unlawfull. Act. 15. 21. & 13. 27. See Jun. Annot. in Act. 13. 15. Buxtorf. Com. Masoret, cap. 8. Mercer in Gen. c. 1. v. 6. pag. 16. & in Gen. 6. 8. pag. 149. & cap. 50. 26. pag. 747. Sixt. Senens. Biblioth. lib. 3. meth. 4. Rainold. de Idololatr. Admonit. ad lectorem, Ainsworth on Gen. 6. 8. *The Jewes under Antiochus devised to reade a portion of the prophets instead of the law.* Elias Thib. in verb. Pat. Hooker Eccl. pol. lib. 5. § 20. Cartwr. Reply, 1. part. pag. 157, 158. *In the christian assemblies they had lectures out of the prophets and apostles.* Justin. Apol. 2. pag. 161. Cypr. l. 2. Ep. 4. & lib. 4. Ep. 5. Ambt. l. 1. Offic. cap. 8. & Ep. 75. Concil. Laodic. cap. 16. Graham. dist. 15. cap. 3. *The writings of the apostles are otherwise distinguished by the Russians then by us: For in their Language there is in S. Matthew an hundred and sixteen chapters, the most of them so little that sometimes there is but three little verses therein according as the sense of the discourse requireth; and all that was done by one Cyrillus a priest of the church of Constantinople: See Cathol. Trad. qu. 9. In times past the Greeks divided Matthew into sixtie eight titles, and three hundred fiftie five chapters: Mark into fourtie eight titles, and two hundred thirty five chapters, as Sixtus Senensis hath it: John into eighteen titles, and two hundred thirtie two chapters. See Caulabon initio suar. in Evangel. Not. In Aretas the Apoc. is distinguished into seventy two chapters, of Andreas Cesarientis into four and twentie parts, and each of these subdivided into three chapters. Amongst the Latines the Gospel of Matthew was divided into ninety four chapters; of Luke, into one hundred an seven; the Epistle to the Romans, into fiftie. The first author of that division which we now follow, some would have Hugo Cardinalis to be, about the year of the Lord, 1254. See River, Ilagog ad Script. cap. 29. § 21. usque ad 31. No man put the verses in the latine bibles before Robert Stephan, and for the new Testament, he performed that first, being holpen by no book greek or latine, Henric. Stephan. Lector. in Concordant. Græc. N. T.*

tations of the scripture, &c. are mens inventions. The conclusion that followeth from these premisses is evidently false; therefore some one of them, if not both, is false also: For of truth nothing but truth can follow. And what they can answer to the premisses of this latter argument, the same will be sufficient to overthrow the other. Catechizing is Gods ordinance: but this or that form of catechisme in respect of method and phrase of speech is the collection and composition of man. Reading the scripture is allowed of God: but the division of the law into fiftie three or fiftie foure greater sections, and the subdivision of these into lesser sections; the partition of severall books into chapters, and the division of them into verses; the appointing of this or that portion of the law, the prophets, and the evangelists to be read ordinarily upon this or that day, is the invention or devise of man. Preaching is commanded of God, so is the interpretation of the scripture; but the phrase and method of sermons is of men. The matter of scripture is the immediate truth of God, but the words and phrases which are as vessels to convey this truth unto us (I speak of translations; not of the originall text) are humane, and not of God by immediate inspiration. God commandeth us to call upon his name both in publick and private; but the words wherein we expresse our desires are our own both in conceived and stinted prayer. These are humane in respect of the word and form; Divine in respect of the matter. And here it must be observed, that positive worship or means
(for

(for these two in this sense are all one) opposed to humane inventions, is that which must be warranted by particular institution, and not by the light of reason, according to the generall rules of scripture. As for example, the sacraments are positive worship or means of worship, and they have particular expresse institution: but the form or manner of administration, as it respecteth decency, order and edification, is not positive worship or means thereof in the sense before mentioned; and therein it sufficeth, if all things be done according to the generall rules of scripture, the light of reason directing in particulars what is decent and to edification. So then devised worship is unlawfull: but it is lawfull to worship God in a form of words devised; for the form is not worship, but the prayer tendred in that form. Mens inventions in Gods worship that be of the same nature and use with true worship or means of worship ordained of God, be unlawfull: but method, order, phrase of speech devised by man, was never judged an invention unlawfull.

to such things as have warrant and allowance onely from the generall rules of scripture.

Book-prayer is an image or similitude of spiritual prayer, which indeed it is not: and the book, as idoles, supplyeth the place of the word and spirit.

idolatry, Greenwood, pag. 8. Johnson, ubi supra.

The accusation is grievous: but if we crave a reason thereof, we shall find them as farre to seek as forward to accuse. Is it onely a similitude of prayer, because it hath onely the externall form of prayer, but wanteth the soul and life thereof?

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Thou shalt not make to thy self, *se without commandment* from God expresse and particular: As by his commandment Moses made the Cherubims in the Sanctuary, Ex. 25. 18. & the brasen serpent in the wilderness, Numb. 21. 8. If we speak of humane inventions forbidden in the second commandment, they are such devised worship as is not commanded & determined by God, and cannot be opposed

Object. 4.

All reading mens writings for praying is

Ansiv.

They might easily answer themselves ; As it is penned or printed it hath onely the externall form, and so it is not properly a prayer : but as it is rehearsed with understanding , affiance of heart, and fervency, it hath the true and whole nature of prayer. And by what reason can a book-prayer be called an image of true prayer which will not agree to prayer first conceived and then uttered ? For if it be uttered with the lips without the intention of the heart, it is a bare similitude : and if the other be read or uttered after an holy manner, with that affection which God requireth in prayer, it is true and acceptable prayer. Words without the heart are but empty sounds , whether read , or pronounced out of the memory , or *ex tempore* : and if the voice be joyned with the heart it is pleasant melody, though our petitions be read out of a book. But the book then (saith he) supplieth the room of the word and spirit. Nothing lesse : For the word of God directeth us what to ask, even when we reade our prayers upon a book, so long as we crave with understanding things agreeable to the will of God : And the spirit doth enable and stirre us up to desire that which is according to Gods will and our necessity. We may utter requests with our lips in conceived prayer without the aid and assistance of the holy Ghost, and so we may in a penned prayer ; but offer up the sighs and grones of the heart we cannot without his grace.

Object. 5.

Johnson, ubi
supra. You

serve God not as himself commandeth, but after your own devising, Ainsw. Confide-
rat. exam. pag. 4. incense

incense in time of the law; Psal. 141. 2. Apoc. 8. 3, 4. But a stinted form of prayer is a strange manner of prayer.

The proposition we grant, if rightly understood: otherwise symbolically and analogically arguments, if the proposition be not rightly taken, are very dangerous. But a stinted form of prayer is no strange manner of worship; because in it all things required to the nature of true prayer may be observed. In the word of God we have direction given, to whom, for what, with what heart and affection, to what end a man ought to pray: but in what method or frame of speech he is to be a petitioner, we find nothing prescribed in particular, neither do we judge any thing necessary, more then this, That order, decency, and edification be observed. That which hath the common nature, definition, use and end of worship, but wanteth Divine authority and institution to make it approved and true worship, that is strange in the worship of God: But the method and phrase of speech hath not the common nature, definition, use or end of worship or prayer belonging unto it. As conceived prayer so a set form of prayer is for substance and nature agreeable to the rules of direction delivered in the word of truth, though for method and words both be humane. Let our brethren set down out of the word of God what is necessarily and essentially required to the nature and being of true prayer, & shew (if they be able) that some one or other condition or requisite cannot be observed in a prescript or stinted form. If this

Ans.

cannot be done (as I think it never hath nor can be) how dare they esteem or style it a strange worship? They tell us, God hath not ordained that manner of worship. But this phrase, *the manner of worship*, is used two wayes: first, as it noteth the substantiall means of worship ordained of God by speciall institution: secondly, as it is put for the outward order or form how this worship or means of worship is performed. A third signification might be added, as when we say the third commandment teacheth in what manner the name and ordinances of God are to be used. Now if it be taken in the first or third signification, the outward frame of words, order, and method is neither means nor manner of worship, either in preaching, prayer, or administration of the sacraments. If in the second, the word of God doth not prescribe any particular form, stinted or not stinted, as necessary, but doth warrant both as allowable: For where nothing is in particular commanded touching the externall form of words and order in which our petitions should be presented to the Lord, there we are left at liberty. And to put religion in reading or uttering words in a stinted or conceived form, where God hath laid no bond upon the conscience, what is it lesse then superstition? If the phrase of speech be *modus* or *medium cultus*, as it is referred to the second commandment, then it is instituted, commanded and determined of God in particular, then that and none other is lawfull and necessary: for so it is in all parts of his positive worship. Those sacramentall
signes

Aug. in epist.

121. cap. 12.

Quamlibet alia verba dicimus, nihil aliud dicimus quam in illa Dominica oratione positum est, si recte & congruenter oramus.

Johnson, ubi supra, pag. 29.

Omnino certum est, Deum ipsum neque requirere neque acceptare superstitionem in verbis.

signes which God hath designed in the covenant, are necessary, and those onely lawfull: and if method and phrase of speech be *medium cultus* in the same sense, the like must be said of that also. In substance a prayer read and conceived is all one, and the one is no more a strange manner of worship then the other. And here let it be observed, that all these objections are made against all use of stinted or read prayers, publick or private, voluntary or imposed, sound and pertinent as well as corrupt, and cannot be restrained to a form imposed upon the minister of the congregation to be used continually, and that corrupt and faulty.

The matter, if supposed to be alike from God, as being truth and according to sound doctrine; the manner (in that we call conceived prayer) is the same which nature teacheth and scripture approveth, and is the onely way in which the prayers of all holy men recorded in scripture since Christ have been carried, as the Papists themselves grant. But for the manner or way of book-prayer, we have not so much as example in scripture for it. *Object. 6.*

The strength of this reason let us view in the like: Mr Smith would prove the originals not to be given as helps before the eye in worship, *Because upon the day of Pentecost and many yeares after the churches of the new Testament did use no books in time of spirituall worship, but prayed, prophesied, and sung psalmes merely out of their hearts, Acts 2. 4, 42. & 10. 44, 48. & 19. 6. 1. Cor. 14. 15, 17, 26, 37. Because no example can be shewed of any man, ordina-* *Answ.*

Smith, Difference of the church, chap. 10. pag. 6.

Idem, cap. 17.

ry or extraordinary, that at or after the day of Pentecost used a book in praying, prophesying and singing of Psalmes: if yea, let it be done, and we yield. And against the use of translations for the hearers thus he argueth; The Prophets and Apostles wrote books, but did never divide their books into chapters and verses: Seeing therefore that chapters and verses were of mans invention, hence it followeth, before chapter and verse came in, the hearers could not turn to search their books in time of hearing. The Apostles in quoting testimonies of the prophets do not quote chapter and verse, but onely say, It is written, The scripture saith, The holy Ghost saith: thereby teaching us that there is no use of chapter and verse for searching in time of hearing. Never was there mention made of any hearer that ever had his book to search in time of hearing. The reasons be the same, and yet I perswade myself, they that dislike a stinted form of prayer will not allow of the conclusion which Mr Smith would inferre. As for the reason it self, whatsoever can be truly spoken of the excellency, profit and use of conceived prayer, we freely and willingly admit: but betwixt it and stinted prayer there is no such disagreement, that if the one be praised, the other must needs be cast out of doores; if the one be allowed, the other must needs be a breach of the second commandment. Nature teacheth, that from the abundance of the heart the mouth should speak: and in the use of a stinted form, repeated by memory, or read upon a book, the mouth speaketh from the abundance of the heart; else in the
stinted

stinted use of psalms, prayers or prayes the saints of God recorded in scripture spake not from the heart. If no example of any holy man since Christ be recorded in scripture who hath tendered his prayers to God in a stinted form of words, or read them out of a book, is this any thing against that practice? Is not the approved practice of the church of the Jews groundd upon reasons common to them and us, and of perpetuall equity, sufficient to justifie an act or order, though no example can be brought for it out of the new testament? I have not heard nor read of such an exception in a matter of this nature in any writer, old or new, Popish or Protestant; and consider, I pray, what dangerous consequences would follow there-upon? I will not presse them, because upon second thoughts (I make no question) it will appear farre amisse. If in that particular of stinted prayer we find not example, will it not suffice if from grounds of scripture we can prove it lawfull, and that all things required in prayer may be observed in a stinted form? If in that particular there be none examples, will it not suffice that analogicall examples of things of the same nature and kind may be produced? And then it will not be hard to find examples since Christ for the use of stinted prayer, as we shall shew hereafter. But what if none example could be produced of that or the like practice? The scripture doth not descend to give particular commandment or example for every thing pertaining to order or manner of administration of Divine things: It is sufficient that there

there be generall rules found for that purpose, according to which particulars must be directed. Nay, which is more, sundry things are not onely lawfull but necessary, for which you can bring no example out of the word of God, neither before nor since Christ. I will spare to mention particulars, because I would not teach profane men to wrangle.

Object. 7.

God may have as much honour or more in our publick assemblies, if a stinted form were not used. And this is a certain truth, That whatsoever the worship and service of God may spare without detriment either to the honour of God or edification of Saints, is superfluous, and so but a vain invention.

Ans.

If all this be granted, it will not follow, that a stinted form is against the second commandment, of the same common nature with an image. For in publick administration of Gods service, in the outward order, method and phrase many things are laid aside by the most, and might be spared by all men, which are against no commandment. And the like may be said of sundry observations. The custome of godfathers and godmothers in baptisme, of calling an assembly by the sound of a bell, of buriall in church-yards might be spared, and yet not against the second commandment. When there be many wayes or means whereby a thing may be attained, it is not an idle invention ordinarily to choose the one or other, as seemeth expedient. Mr Robinson disputeth thus against our stinted form of prayer ; *It cannot be an ordinance*

nance of Christ, because the church may perfectly and entirely worship God without it, with all the parts of holy and spirituall worship, as did the apostolick churches for many yeares before such Liturgie was devised or imposed. I should think both these reasons carry the same sense, *sc.* That that may be spared without which the church may perfectly and entirely worship God with all parts of holy and spirituall worship. And if that be the meaning, then I deny that to be a superfluous or vain invention which might be spared without detriment either to the honour of God or edification of Saints. For set forms of blessing, catechismes, administration of the sacraments, be not superfluous and vain inventions, and yet all parts of Gods spirituall worship may perfectly and entirely be performed without them. The use of a set translation of holy scripture to be read in the congregation by such or such portions or sections, is no vain invention: the distribution of it into chapters and verses, the quotation of chapter and verse, the marginall references, are no superfluous devises: and yet the church may perform all parts of Gods worship entirely and perfectly without these, as did the apostolick churches. The prescribing of a set form of psalmes to be sung by all the people jointly together, is no superfluous devise, and yet it may be spared without detriment either to the honour of God or edification of the people, as it was in the apostolick churches for many years: Of
 done according to the generall rules of scripture may be said to be from him: which is not to the purpose.

It is not from God by particular institution as a substantial means or help of worship, that this or that division of scripture be observed, much lesse that which the Jews used, or is now observed in our church: But the division is of God, as that which is

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which

*The scriptures
of God are not
all of one sort:
some parts be
easie, some
parts be hard:
Direction
where to be-
gin in reading,
and how to
proceed, is not
altogether su-
perfluous.
Justinian the
Emperour ap-*

*pointeth an order for the reading of the Laws; what books and titles he would have
read the first yeare, and what the second, &c. Justinian. in Proem. Pandect.
Calvin. epist. 87. Quod ad formulam precum, &c. valde probo ut illa certa exstet à
qua pastoribus discedere in functione non liceat, tam ut consularur quorundam simpli-
citati & imperitiæ, quàm ut certius ita constet omnium inter se ecclesiarum consensus, &c.*

which more in the next chapter. Set forms of confessions of churches, set forms of professions of faith to be used in the publick worship of God, be not vain inventions, and yet you may say of them as you do of stinted forms of prayer, They may be spared, There is no example for them in scripture since Christ. The word *consubstantiall* is not necessary, as without which the doctrine of that truth of the Divinity of our Saviour Christ cannot be maintained; (for that were to accuse the holy pen-men of scripture) yet was it not an idle or superfluous invention. In some reformed churches before preaching-time the church assembled hath the scriptures read in such order that the whole canon thereof is oftentimes in one yeare run through: In others there is no such order of simple reading, but, besides their set sermons, two chapters are paraphrastically expounded, with the principall points thereof taken and applyed unto their auditours: Neither of these simply necessary, nor yet superfluous inventions. To kneel in prayer, yea to prescribe that men shall ordinarily kneel in publick prayer, if with conveniency they may, is not an idle invention; and yet men may pray sitting, standing, falling upon the face. Men may meet together to worship God at fit time, in convenient place; observe due order, method, mode-

ration

ration in length, according to the abilities and necessities of the people, without rules and prescriptions for that purpose: and yet rules, prescriptions and precedents are not idle inventions. And though it be possible to worship God aright and further the edification of his Saints as much without as with a set form, yet a set form of prayer devised and consented unto (if it were possible) by all the sound, true, orthodox churches in the world, is in many respects expedient; such a form as being free from all exception, approved of all, might testify their sweet harmonie and concert. And the like may be said of forms of catechismes, confessions, &c. A stinted form then of publick prayer is not one in common nature with images devised for worship, nor opposite to the worship which must in speciall be instituted of God; it is no vain or superfluous devise, much lesse an humane invention condemned in the second commandment.

It is not strange at all, that one and the same thing should be a sin in one and not in another; If by *the same thing* you mean the same materially onely. And if that which was lawfull to all people, priests and Levites in the old Testament, cannot be unlawfull now, then neither circumcision nor any other Jewish rite is now unlawfull to us.

True it is, that one and the same thing may be sin in one and not in another, when the reasons and considerations be not the same: as that which a man is bound to do by speciall calling or office, may be sin in another which is not called and ap-

See Calvin
Opusc. epist.
catechis. & e-
pist. 87.

Object. 8.

Answ.

Privilegia
quædam cau-
sæ sunt, quæ-
dam personæ:
et ideo quæ-
dam ad hære-
dem transmit-
tuntur, quæ
causæ sunt;
quæ personæ
sunt, ad hære-
dem non trans-
eunt, Pandect.
lib. 50. tit. 17.
reg. 196.

See Jun. in
Jud. v. 6, 7.
& Append.
parall. sacr.
par. 11. Rai-
nold. Censur.
tom. 2. præf. 17.
188, 189, 190,
&c.

pointed to that service. And many things were lawfull in the old Testament, being according to Gods word, that are not so now, viz. things that were proper and peculiar to them and those times in respect of the manner of dispensation Divine. But things which have grounds and reasons common to those and our times, in respect of persons and things, and do not in peculiar respects belong unto them onely, these, if lawfull to them, are lawfull to us; and, if forbidden to us, they are forbidden to them. And of this sort is a stinted form of prayer or blessing, not peculiar to them but common to us with them, not a priviledge of the persons but of the cause. It is given for a rule concerning examples, That a reason drawn from them doth necessarily conclude, *sc. cum unum particulare ab alio particulari probatur vi similitudinis communis toti generi sub quo ea particularia continentur*: But the publick use of a stinted, free, arbitrarie form of prayer, praise, or blessing, is grounded upon reasons and considerations common to the priests or Levites and the ministers of the Gospel; the things are like, and this likeness is common to the whole kind; no materiall circumstance can be named which should appropriate it unto them onely. Therefore if the publick stinted use of prayer or blessing was not a breach of the second commandment in them, it is not a sin against that commandment in us. It is objected, that their forms were not as ours, strictly imposed, ordinarily to be used without so much as the variation of a word. But this unlooseth not the

the knot, but rather tyeth it the faster. For if it be a sin against the second commandment to use such a form, it must not be done once: If it be no sin, it is not made sinfull by this, that it is used this week, or the next, as occasion is offered. If it be lawfull to use the Lords prayer as a stinted form, it is not made unlawfull, that I use it in these precise words without addition or alteration. And if the priests were not tyed to one precise form of blessing without addition or alteration, yet might they lawfully use one form without addition or variation; and that which was allowable in them, is not unlawfull in us, upon the same grounds and considerations. So that we may summe up this reason thus; If publick stinted forms of blessing, prayer, or praise, might be used ordinarily by the priests, Levites, and ministers of the Gospel without addition or alteration, then all stinted forms to be used ordinarily without addition or alteration be not a breach of the second commandment, in common nature one with an image devised for worship. But the priests and Levites in the time of the Law, and the ministers of the Gospel in the New Testament, might ordinarily use a stinted form without addition or alteration. Or thus it may be framed; If a publick stinted form of prayer be unlawfull, then either simply and absolutely all stinted forms to be used in publick, or such onely as are to be used ordinarily without alteration or addition, or such onely as be corrupt and faulty: But a publick stinted form is not simply and absolutely unlawfull: for then

this exception, That it is to be used ordinarily and without alteration, is vain and superfluous; not onely because it is ordinarily to be used without alteration or addition: for then that consideration taken away, a stinted form should be just and lawfull; as also then it should be lawfull at one time to use this or that phrase of speech, unlawfull at another, when yet the same occasion requireth it. If onely because corrupt and faulty, then a stinted form is not an humane invention, a breach of the second commandment, an idole-prayer, a superfluous devise to be condemned; then the fault and corruption removed, the form it self is lawfull to be used without addition or variation.

Object. 9.

A stinted form of prayer is not unlawfull to him that needeth it, as not able largely to expresse his own desires, or lay open his wants particularly: but to him that is able and needeth it not it is unlawfull; because in such case a set form of prayer is an arbitrary help or furtherance forbidden by the second commandment.

Ans.

But then a set form of prayer in words devised by others or by a mans self, is not unlawfull because stinted or devised, not of it self, nor to all, but by accident onely. Then it is not a devised worship, strange incense, an idole-prayer, an image of prayer, forbidden in the second commandment: for whatsoever is verified of a generall as generall, is verified of all underneath it. Then they must not say, Humane inventions in Gods worship are forbidden; but, Humane inventions in the worship of God are lawfull to them
that

that need them, unlawfull to them that need them not, because arbitrarie. Then the exception of using a stinted form ordinarily without alteration or addition is altogether fruitlesse : for the form is unlawfull because arbitrarie. And for the thing it self, it is an unwritten tradition, because it hath no ground in scripture. For it is a received rule, That all distinctions in Divinity not grounded upon the word of God, are unwritten traditions, indeed humane unwarrantable inventions and additions. But this distinction, That a stinted form of prayer is warrantable to him that needeth it, because of his inability, unwarrantable to him that needeth it not, is grounded upon no text of scripture, or solid consequence drawn from thence. All arbitrarie helps and furtherances in Gods service are not forbidden in the second commandment ; nor any help or furtherance, because arbitrarie in this sense ; that is, no help or furtherance devised in Gods worship that is lawfull to one because he needeth it, is forbidden to another by the second commandment because he needeth it not. The method of sermons and prayers, set forms of catechismes, blessings, and baptizing are arbitrarie helps and furtherances, as they are called ; (as whether we preach by doctrine, reason and use, or in another method ; begin with confession or thanksgiving ; use this precise form of words, *I baptize thee &c.* or, *Be thou baptized, &c.*) but not forbidden in the commandment. Helps and furtherances in Gods worship (so to speak, because I would not contend about

Willer, Contr.
11. qu. 1. Ap-
pend. & Cont.
12. qu. 2. Pis-
cat. in Matth.
28. 19. Schol.
Maldonat. in
Matth. 28. 19.
Cham. Panstr.
tom. 4. De
Bapt. l. 5. c. 3.
§. 5. Johnson,
De prec. & l-
turg. pag. 28,
29.

Jer. 7. 31. &
19. 5.
Col. 2. 22, 23.
Deut. 12. 30,
31, 32.

Deut. 12. 8, 9.
Gen. 8. 20. &
12. 7. & 13. 18.
& 20. 15. &
26. 25. & 33.
20.
Exod. 17. 15.
& 24. 4.
Deut. 12. 5, 6,
11, 13, 14.
Lev. 1. 2, 3. &
2. 1.
Deut. 12. 5, 6,
26, 27.
Ex. 12. 6.
Numb. 9. 3.

Omnia sunt
prohibita quæ
non reperiun-
tur concessa,
Gloss. ad Dig.
l. 47. tit. 23.
leg. 3.
Omnia per le-
gem sunt per-
missa quæ non
inveniuntur prohibita, Gloss. ad Dig. l. 4. tit. 6. leg. 28.

about words) are of two sorts : Some necessary, and in nature and use the same with the true worship of God instituted by his Highnesse particularly ; and these are unlawfull if devised by men, because devised, neither can any necessity be pretended to excuse them. For in the point of Gods worship, what is of the substance of worship and in conscience necessary, that if it be not determined of God and instituted by him, is unlawfull. Others are mere circumstances concerning the method, phrase, externall manner of celebration ; which are not determined by God, and therefore no particular is unlawfull which is according to the generall rules in scripture. Thus for the place of sacrifice, before it was determined, it was lawfull in any place, because no place was designed : but after it was once determined, it was lawfull in no place but that alone. Voluntary and free-will-offerings might be offered at any time, because for them no time was determined : but the passeover might be celebrated onely at one time, because the precise time of it was determined. In all matters of positive worship and determined circumstances, by the word of God, such onely are lawfull as the word of God hath enjoined ; and all things are forbidden which are not commanded. But in circumstances and matters of order not determined, no particular is necessary, and all such are lawfull as be consonant to the generall rules given in scripture ; and that, if agreeable to the generall rules, is lawfull which is not forbidden. And so in this particular, if God had deter-

mined

mined any prescript form of prayer, either for some time or for ever, to all men or some onely, that form to such and at such times had been necessary, and that alone lawfull, because determined. If God had tied men to conceived prayer without any set or stinted form devised by themselves or imposed by others, that alone had been lawfull, because determined: But seeing we are enjoined to pray, confesse sinne, entreat mercy, and no set form determined; therefore any fit form is warrantable, one as well as another. For where the law hath put no difference, it is not for us to distinguish. Let it be demanded of a man when he prayeth, why he useth that form he then useth, what answer can he return but this, That no form is determined, and so any fitting form is warrantable? Or if he answer otherwise in effect, he shall answer amisse; as not knowing the true ground of the lawfulnessse of that he doth. No man hath authoritie to devise any substantiall means of worship, which must be referred to the second commandment, no more then he may teach new doctrines or institute new sacraments in Gods church upon his own head. But the order, phrase, or method, which is devised by man, is no worship of God. And if we put no difference betwixt the positive worship of God, which he hath in particular commanded, and must not be devised of men, and the order, phrase and method in which his worship is performed, it is not possible to worship God aright without sinne. But if we shall look

more narrowly into the former distinction, we shall find it flat contradictorie to it self and to the commandment. For by *arbitrarie furtherances* we must understand, not devised furtherances, which this answer granteth to be lawfull, but furtherances which are not necessary to one man though lawfull to another. And then whereas the second commandment forbiddeth devised worship, which is unlawfull, as contrary to the eternall rule of righteousnesse; by this answer arbitrarie furtherances, not devised furtherances, should be condemned: which is clean contrary to the scope and end of the commandment. For example, when the commandment saith, *Thou shalt not make to thy self any graven image, &c.* If a man shall distinguish thus, *Devised images are not unlawfull to him that needeth, but onely arbitrarie images, sc. to him that needeth them not*, should he not speak contrary to the commandment? The case is the same in this particular: For the things forbidden in the second commandment are in generall nature one with an image, *sc.* devised worship, which carrieth not the stamp or approbation of God. And when a stinted or set form of prayer is impleaded as contrary to that royall precept, do they not speak contradictories that say, A stinted form is lawfull to him that needeth it, but an arbitrarie form unlawfull, *viz.* a stinted or devised form, to him that needeth it not? For this is as much as to say, devised worship is lawfull and acceptable in him that needeth that help; but arbitrarie worship, to wit, to him that needeth it not, is forbidden.

Acti-

Actions lawfull in case or upon condition onely, the case being amoved, become unlawfull: As for David to eat the shew-bread: and in case the woman be not able to bring a lambe for her burnt-offering, then a young pigeon shall be accepted. Now the lawfulnessse of a stinted form of prayer lieth onely in case of some necessitie, as a naturall help to supply some defect.

Object. 10.

Many things no question are lawfull in case of necessitie which in a time free are unlawfull. But the things unlawfull out of case of necessitie, are such as God hath forbidden in his word; as the eating of shew-bread, &c. whereas no reason hath been alledged to prove the use of a stinted form unlawfull, more out of then in the case of necessitie. Also that necessitie which doth legitimate an action unlawfull out of case of necessity, must either free us from the commandment, or is in speciall dispensed withall by God himself: But necessity of a stinted form, to free from the obligation of the second commandment, or dispensation by way of prerogative in that case, none hath, nor can be shewed. David did eat the shew-bread and sinned not, *sc.* in case of extremitie: For ceremoniall precepts must give place to morall duties. The priests in the temple profane the sabbath, not simply and properly, but according to the opinion of the adversaries, if every action of the hand do profane the sabbath: or they profane the sabbath, because they do that by the appointment of God which otherwise would be a profanation both of the temple and the sabbath.

Answ.

*Lex cessat ubi
necessitas ve-
nit, Gratian.
Decr. p. 2. q. 1.
can. 1. cap. 41.*

*Matth. 12. 1, 2.
vers. 5, 6.*

If the woman be not able, then instead of a lamb a young pigeon shall be accepted, because the Law-giver hath so appointed: otherwise (I should think) it had been sinne for the poor woman to bring a pigeon that was not of ability to bring a lamb: For her extreme necessitie had freed her from the law, but authoritie she had none to institute one rite in the place of another. If we apply these instances to the matter in hand, they will not hold: For God never forbad a stinted form of prayer; never gave commandment, that who-soever did offer the sacrifice of prayer should bring a conceived prayer; nor by dispensation speciall and peculiar warranted him that wanteth a conceived, to bring a book-prayer. And if the cases be like, (I should think) the Lord would have prescribed a set form for the weak and feeble Christian, as he hath appointed the oblation of the poor woman, and not left him to seek up and down he knoweth not where, and to bring an humane invention in stead of pure and true worship. And if the Lord have determined any set form in that case, then the weak Christian must use that alone and none other. Let this distinction passe for current, and what commandment is there which may not be deluded: For, consonant to these positions, we may say, Images must not be devised for worship, but in some case of necessitie: for they may be naturall helps to teach or stirre up affection, as well as a book may be a naturall help to supply some defect in prayer: The minister must not use wine, milk, or rose-water as the
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the outward signe in baptisme, unlesse it be in some case of necessity, as a naturall help to supply the defect of water: The midwife must not baptize out of the case of necessity, when the minister is at hand; but in case of necessity she is a naturall help to supply the defect of a minister: The pastour must be apt to teach, unlesse it be in case of necessity, when an ignorant man is chosen to supply his room: A man must not defraud or circumvent his neighbour; it is true, unlesse it be in case of necessity. This also seemeth strange, that a book should be a naturall help to supply some defect in case of necessitie, and cease to be naturall when voluntarily used as an help and furtherance by him that needeth it not.

The conclusion of all is this; That a stinted publick form of prayer is the breach of no commandment, no forbidden invention of man, either in the deviser or user, in the case of necessity or otherwise.

CHAP. III.

It is as lawfull to pray unto God in a form of words devised by others, as to sing psalmes to the praise of God in a stinted form of words prescribed by others.

3. Arg.

IF it be lawfull to sing psalmes to the prayse of God in a stinted form of words prescribed by others and devised by man, then likewise to pray unto God in a stinted form devised by others. For as prayer is an ordinance of God and a branch of his worship, so is singing of psalmes to the prayse of God: As God hath left no stinted form of prayer for his church whereunto he hath tied all men and all churches, no more hath he prescribed any stinted form of singing as necessary for all times and churches in the new Testament: As the one must be done with the heart and spirit, so the other: As in the one the words are devised by men and prescribed by others, so in singing of psalmes: If the one be the invention of man, a strange prayer, the similitude of a prayer; the other is an invention of man, a strange psalme, the similitude of a psalme. And if a man be disposed to reason against singing of psalmes in a form of words devised by others, he might more plausibly argue, That in the infancy of the church, when God saw a set form of psalmes to be necessarie, he inspired holy men to pen holy and divine psalmes, which might be of use for that time, when such
worship

worship was required : but in the times of the new Testament no set form of singing is prescribed of God ; no authoritie is given to the church or ordinary officers to prescribe any set form which might be of use to all churches ; there is neither precept for nor precedent of any prescript form of singing in the scripture since Christs time ; all essentiall parts of Gods worship may be performed without it, as appeareth by the examples of the primitive churches : and seeing God never commanded nor promised to accept any such stinted forms, it is a manifest breach of the second commandment. These and such like arguments do make as strongly in every point against a stinted form of psalmes as against a prescript form of prayer. But I have not read, that the singing of psalmes in a prescript form devised by others is unlawfull.

Singing of psalmes and praying differ many wayes : as, Many psalmes are for instruction onely ; and those psalmes which contain prayers, are written for our instruction. In prayer, the minister alone uttereth the words, the people adding their *Amen* in the end ; but in singing, every person in the church pronounceth every word and syllable aloud. The psalmes are parts of scriptures, wherein God speaketh unto us, teaching and instructing us, and we our selves, and one another mutually. Prayers are poured forth in prose ; psalmes in verse. In prayer we beg things necessary for our selves and others ; in psalmes we praise God for mercies received, &c.

It is vain to examine or alledge these or such like

Object. I.
Robins. Justif.
against Bern.
pag. 467.
Copy of a Letter,
pag. 7, 8.
Johnson, De
prec. & liturg.
pag. 14, 15.
Greenwood,
Against Giff.
pag. 13. You
speak like an
ignorant man
to say that
singing is
prayer, &c.
Answer.

like differences, because they make nothing to weaken the force of the argument. For be the differences never so many in these and other particulars, in this they agree, that they be parts of worship to be performed according to the will and commandment of God: and therefore if a stinted form of prayer be unlawfull, because not commanded or ordained of God; a stinted form of psalmes, not bearing the Lords stamp, must come under the same censure, unlesse they can plead speciall dispensation for it. And if a prescript form of psalmes not commanded of God be allowable and may be used in Gods service, a stinted form of prayer is unjustly censured for that reason. It is a received rule, *A Quatenus ad Omne valet argumentum.* If stinted prayer be unwarrantable because it is not appointed of God; a stinted form of singing not commanded must not be used. If a prescript form of singing not commanded of God be approveable in his sight, for that cause a stinted form of prayer must not be disliked. One circumstance that putteth a materiall difference in the thing or person from whence the argument or reason of likenesse is drawn, is sufficient to weaken its force: but twentie particular differences betwixt the branches of worship weaken not an argument drawn from the agreement of the branches in the common nature of worship: Of which sort this is. The Anabaptists may put many differences betwixt circumcision and baptisme; and yet the argument is good against them, Infants of Christian parents ought to be baptized, because the chil-

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venit tali quā
tale, convenit
omni tali.

children of Jews in covenant were circumcised. For let the particular differences be never so many, in this they agree, That they are both sacraments of initiation, and so belong to them that be in covenant, *sc.* the faithfull and their seed. The Papists put many differences betwixt circumcision and the sacraments of the new Testament; and yet this is a good & strong argument, Circumcision is a seal of the righteousness of faith, therefore the sacraments are seals of the covenant of grace. For however circumcision and baptisme and the Lords supper differ in their particular natures, in the common authour, nature and end of sacraments they agree. This is a sound and good reason, that lay-men and midwives ought not to baptize, Because God hath coupled together the authoritative preaching of the word and administration of the sacraments; and yet it is no hard matter to assigne many particular differences betwixt the word and sacraments. A caviller might easily have found out many particular differences betwixt the sin of the angels and the Sodomites, and those against whom the Apostle writeth; but that had not infringed his argument from those examples. It is a superfluous thing to heap up differences which are nothing to the point in hand. And if we compare this answer with the reasons marshalled to fight against a stinted form of prayer, it doth plainly overthrow and put them to flight. For thus they must needs run, Means of Divine worship not ordained of God are unlawfull; to wit, in stinted prayer, but not in forms of praising

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K God.

God. All strange worship is unlawfull : But a stinted form of prayer is strange worship, *ſc.* when the minister ſpeaketh alone to God, but not when the congregation pronounceth every word with the minister : for then either a deviſed form is not ſtrange worship, or all ſtrange worship is not unlawfull. Mens inventions in Gods worship are unlawfull : what all inventions or deviſed forms ? No, but deviſed forms in proſe, not in verſe ; when we pray, not when we praiſe God ; when we ſpeak to God, not when we admoniſh one another. Becauſe this answer cometh often, I deſire our brethren to conſider, whether any other conſtruction can poſſibly be made of it then this, and whether ought can be ſpoken more groſſe and contradictory to their poſitions. The diſcourſes that I have ſeen againſt ſtinted forms of prayer in generall need no other confutation, but an underſtanding reader to obſerve how in this answer they turn the edge of their own weapons againſt themſelves.

Object. 2.
Copy of a Letter, pag. 8.

The penmen of the pſalmes were prophets extraordinarily aſſiſted and immediately by God deſigned to that work ; ſo are not the authours of the Liturgie.

Anſw.

This is not to the purpoſe. For the pſalmes penned by the prophets are paterns and forms of ſpiritual ſongs, but not ſet forms preſcribed to us as pſalmes to be ſung in thoſe very words and forms. Though the pſalmes be parts of the canonicall ſcripture, our brethren muſt eſteem the uſe of them as a preſcript form to be the deviſe of man ; becauſe
God

God hath not given them to that end, nor by his commandment tied us and all churches to them and none others, in the precise form of words. When in the new Testament we are exhorted to sing psalmes, they will not say that we are tied to Davids psalmes, or other songs given by immediate Divine inspiration. If therefore a prescript form of psalmes be lawfull, it must be of such as are devised by men, and not immediately inspired by the holy Ghost. Besides, we cannot say that the psalmes as they are sung in metre in our churches, or (for ought I know) in any churches in the Christian world, are the immediate and infallible truth of God, given by inspiration of God, any more then we can say of an holy paraphrase upon the scripture, that it is the scripture it self. In the new Testament since Christ we have no precedent of any stinted form of singing recorded in scripture: and if we look to the practice of the times after the Apostles, we shall find the church used other hymnes, and not scripture-psalmes onely.

*Eph. 5. 19.
Col. 3. 16.*

Euseb. Hist. lib. 2. cap. 17. sheweth out of Philo, that the first Christians were accustomed to sing proprios hymnos. Eccl. hist. lib. 5. cap. 28. The primitive church had certain hymnes composed and sung to the honour of Christ. Theodoret. lib. 4. cap. 29. Ephrem made hymnes and

psalmes in the Syrian tongue, and the same were sung at the solemn feasts of martyrs. And Sozomen saith plain, the same hymnes and psalmes were sung in the churches of Syria. See Concil. Laod. can. 59. Concil. Toletan. 4. can. 12.

There is a necessity of having forms of psalmes *Object. 3.* set down in words; not so of prayers. In psalmes there is of necessitie required a certain known form of words, that two or more may sing together, according to the nature of the ordinance, wherein many joyning vocally do make concent or harmo-

Robinson, A-
gainst Bern.
pag. 467.
Copie of a Let-
ter, pag. 7.

Ans.

Torpenè psal-
lentium chori
quot gentium
diveritates,
Hieron. ep. 17.
ad Marc. cap. 6.
Of singing by
course, Euseb.
l. 2. cap. 17.
Socrat. lib. 6.
cap. 8. Theo-
doret. l. 2. cap.
24. & lib. 4.
cap. 27. Plin.
Epist. lib. 10.
ep. 97. Basil.
epist. 63. ad
Cleric. Neo-
cesariens. Na-
zianz. Funebr.
orat. de Basil.
August. Con-
fess. lib. 9 c. 7.

Tertull. ad uxor. l. 2. extr. dicit psalmum inter duos sonare. *The councill of Laodicea*, can. 15. *forbiddeth any to sing but him to whom the office of singing doth pertain.* Hieron. in epist. ad Rustic. Dicit psalmum in ordine tuo. Hieron. com. 19 Eph. l. 2. ad cap. 5. Gratian. Dist. 92. cap. 1. 3. *Of singing with modulation of the voice*, Augustin. Confess. l. 9. c. 6, 7. & l. 10. cap. 33. *Of singing all together*, Ambr. Hexamer. l. 3. c. 5. Responsoriis psalmorum, cantu viro- rum, mulierum, virginum, parvulorum, consonus undarum fragor resultat. *And perhaps, that of Hilary in Psal. 65.* Audiat orantis populi consistens quis extra eccle- siam vocem: spectet celebres hymnorum sonitus. See Conc. Carthag. 4. can. 10. Concil. Aquisgran. cap. 132, 133. Harm. Confess. confess. Helvet. cap. 23. Zanch. De re- dempt. in pr. 3. Zepper. De pol. eccl. l. 1. cap. 15. Bellarm. De oper. in part. cap. 14. 16. Pleraque veterum ecclesie psalmodia caruerint, nec ab aliis damnata sunt. Pamel. in Cypr. De orat. Dom. not. 6.

ny. By which it appeareth how unadvisedly these ministers and others do thus again and again urge set forms of psalmes to prove set forms of prayers.

In the new Testament we have no precedent for the manner of singing recorded in scripture: and in the primitive churches following the Apostles times it was various, according to the custome of severall nations; sometimes by one, the rest hear- ing; sometimes by course or quire-wise, as the women answered the men, Exod. 15. (*See Fun. Exod. 15.*) and sometimes by the whole multi- tude; and sometimes it was but like fair long rea- ding, with modulation of the voyce. The pri- mitive Fathers therefore did not judge it necessary that the psalmes should be sung by the whole multitude that were present. And if it be neces- sary, yet is not a prescribed form in that respect necessary. In preaching and prayer both, before that people can joyn with the minister, a stinted form of words is necessary; and this is all can be said of singing. This or that form prescribed is

necessarie

necessarie in neither; a stinted form is necessary in both. The people cannot sing with the minister, unlesse what is to be sung be represented unto them in a set form of words; nor can they joyn in prayer, or attend to the word preached, unlesse the matter of prayer or preaching be conveyed to their understanding in a set form of words. Is a minister able to expresse the necessities of the people or the doctrine of salvation in a form of words devised and studied by himself, and is he not able by meditation and study to dictate or compose a psalme to be sung by the people as occasion requireth? And if he be able to compose a psalme, in respect of the form of words and method, is not a stinted form of singing a devised help, an arbitrary help to him, and so forbidden, as it was said of prayer? Christ hath given gifts unto his ministers for preaching and prayer; hath he not for singing of psalmes also? And if it be a dishonour to Christ (as some affirm) that they should use a form of prayer devised by others, is it not a dishonour likewise that they should use a form of singing devised by others, as not enabled with gifts of themselves to furnish the necessities of the church? When prescribed and set forms of psalmes were necessary in the church of the Jews, did the Lord commit this office to the priests, Levites, or ordinary officers of the church, or to the prophets extraordinarily inspired and called of God to this purpose? To whom hath the Lord committed that charge, and given ordinary authoritie to prescribe forms of singing in the

*Copy of a Letter,
1er, pag. 11.*

churches in the new Testament? If there be such difference, as is pretended, betwixt the devised forms of praying and singing, it is necessary that he that denieth the one to be lawfull and challengeth liberty in the other, should shew his commission. *Christ fitteth his servants with gifts for the whole work of the ministry, to pray as well as to preach by their own gifts: for prayer is an ordinance of the new Testament as well as preaching; and they are made able thereunto, not by shewing the sufficiency of other men whose prayer they reade; but their sufficiency is of God enabling them.* Thus our brethren reason against read or prescribed prayer; and doth not the same hold as truly against the use of a prescribed psalme? To sing psalmes is an ordinance of the new Testament, and the minister of God is enabled to sing as well as to pray by his own gifts; otherwise he is not enabled for the whole work of his ministry: and if he reade or sing a psalme, whose gifts doth he exercise therein? This necessitie being presupposed, I would know, whether that particular form of singing, devised by man and prescribed by others, be an humane invention or no? If it be the devise of man, then it is forbidden in the second commandment, as they say: If it be not of man, then it must be of God by speciall institution and immediate inspiration: then the self-same form of words issuing from the same cause or authour should be humane, if delivered in form of prayer; and Divine, in form of a psalme. Whereas this necessitie is onely an adjunct to the thing, and doth not so change the nature

nature of it as to make that which is of man by common gifts to be from God by speciall institution; as it must in this case, according to their tenent. I would know further, whether this devised or prescribed form of singing be an acceptable worship and service of God or no? If it be, then some worship devised by men is acceptable to God in case of necessitie: which cannot be admitted: If it be not worship, then a devised form of prayer cannot be condemned as a devised worship. And therefore if there be any such necessity, as is pretended, it should rather exempt from the practice of singing then give liberty to a devised form which God hath not warranted nor approved. For it is a rule in Divinity, That against a generall negative precept no particular affirmative can be lawfull, unlesse that particular be warranted in scripture: For the scripture should not be perfect, to furnish the man of God completely to every good work, if a particular affirmative not warranted in speciall might be lawfull against a generall negative; seeing in that case a man can have no sure ground to rest on. But against this supposed generall negative precept, forbidding all humane inventions in Gods worship, all devised helps and furtherances, all strange worship, there is no particular warrant allowing it in singing psalmes. When all devised worship is condemned, how shall the conscience be assured that this particular devised worship shall be accepted? No necessity excuseth in the doing, of a thing otherwise unlawful, but that which exempteth from the

In religion there is no truth, but grounded upon the scriptures; no error or heresie, but repugnant to the scriptures; no hereticks, but refuted by scriptures, *whitak. Against Rainolds, chap. 3.*

the cōmandment in that case. Now whether that pretended necessity of a set form should exempt from the generall negative precept forbidding all devised forms as will-worship(as they expound it) or frō the affirmative precept of singing of psalmes, let them judge who put the exception. Necessitie which hath no law, in some particular case, presupposeth some free time wherein that pressing necessitie hath no place; & then what necessity hath found out for remedy, that must cease, the necessity ceasing: But that any necessity which lieth continually upon all churches, as doth the singing in a prescript form, if they sing at all, should warrant them to do that which is cōtrary to a general negative precept, is a tradition in Divinity never heard of before. The reason therefore standeth still in force; If it be lawfull to praise God in a form of words devised by man, it is lawfull also to pray to God in a stinted form; and an arbitrary form is altogether as lawfull as a devised form. And if Christians shall not withdraw themselves from the stinted prayers of the congregation before a materiall difference be shewed in these particulars, and that distinction of Arbitrary and Necessary devised forms be proved by scripture or solid reason, the world shall end (I am confident) before they separate. And thus some other objections made against a stinted Liturgie are answered.

Object. 4. It is Gods ordinance, that the churches should be edified by their gifts who minister unto them, and that in prayer as well as in preaching: and Christ fitteth all his servants with gifts for the whole

whole work of the ministry: But in reading a stinted Liturgie a minister doth not edifie the church with his own gifts.

This reason concludeth not against a publick stinted Liturgie as a breach of the second commandment or a devised worship, nor as unlawfull in it self, but by accident onely, as it hindreth the edification of the church by the ministers own gifts. But I desire to know whether it be not lawfull for the minister at all in the publick execution of his office or any part thereof to make use of other mens gifts; or that he must not make use of other mens onely, and not of his own at all. If the former; it is not proved by any text of scripture: If the later; it maketh nothing against the use of stinted prayer. In every part of his publick function, preaching, prayer, blessing, singing, administration of the sacraments, reading of the scriptures, a minister may and ought to make use of the gifts of others. In exposition of scripture he may make use of the divers readings, marginall notes, interlineary glosses, marginall references; he may make use of the gifts of linguists, translators, paraphrasts, and commentatours to explain hard phrases, find out the coherence and meaning of the text, &c. In matters of controversie, of the labours and gifts of them that have travelled most painfully therein: In application of doctrine he may make use of such as have handled that matter more soundly, fully, pithily then he is able: and in the act of preaching, of all these joyntly or severally, as he doth utter what he hath gathered out of his

Answ.

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notes or memory. Calvine, a man of great learning, admirable dexteritie of wit, singular skill in the Hebrew tongue, was yet pleased in his commentaries upon the psalmes to make great use of Vatablus annotations. Mercer in his exquisite Commentary upon Job was not a little holpen by the sermons of Calvine upon the same book. Mollerus is pleased for the most part to gather his observations upon the psalmes word for word professedly out of Calvine. How many sermons and tractates be extant at this day wherein we may observe those that follow to have done more then track the steps of them that have gone before them, and this without rebuke? In prayer a minister may use the gifts of others, to furnish himself with method, words, matter and arguments; and utter his meditations, as upon meditation he hath digested them, by such helps: yea, he may use those very expressions and forms which others have used before him, when they be more fit and moving then of himself he could reach unto. In singing psalmes, though the minister be able to turn them into more grave, solid, exact metre then usuall, and nearer to the originall, yet it is not denied but he may make use of other mens gifts inferior to his own. In reading the scripture in a prescribed translation, which is a part of Gods publick worship, whose gifts doth the minister make use of? what ministeriall gift is exercised or manifested therein? Every child of twelve or thirteen yeares old, in respect of the outward act, is as well able to reade a chapter as the stinted Liturgie.

They

*See Moller. in
Psalm. epist.
dedicat.*

They answer, that, Between publick reading of scriptures and publick reading of prayers there be two differences : First, the publick reading of the scripture is Gods ordinance; but stinted prayers have not warrant from the word. Secondly, reading of the scriptures in the publick assembly simply considered in it self, is not the proper work of the minister.

*Object. 2.
Copy of a Letter,
ser, pag. 12.*

But this later is not to the purpose : For we speak of reading the scriptures as it is done by a minister in the publick assembly and in the solemn worship of God ; be it when he readeth his text, being a shorter or larger portion of holy writ. The first is a flat contradiction to the reason it self, and a plain confession that it is of no worth. For when they say, Reading the scripture is Gods ordinance, wherein the minister useth anothers gifts and not his own ; but the introducing of new forms by mens devise and appointment is not warranted : do they not confesse, that this is no just exception against stinted prayer, because it should condemn the ordinance of God, no lesse then it ? and, that stinted prayer is not unlawfull because a minister in reading it doth make use of another mans gifts, but because it is unwarrantable ? which is the matter to be proved, and importeth a confession that it is not proved by this reason but rather overthrown. For if they restrain the proposition thus, That stinted form of prayer is unlawfull wherein the minister maketh use of another mans gifts not of his own ; the reason consisteth all of particulars, beggeth onely, but

Answ.

concludeth nothing. If the proposition be generall, That is not an ordinance of God in the use whereof a minister exerciseth other mens gifts and not his own; the exception here annexed is directly crosse thereunto, for the publick reading of the scriptures is Gods ordinance. But seeing this is a matter so much insisted upon, That a stinted form of Liturgie is not warranted, and so unlawfull, let us consider a little how many wayes a thing may be warranted, and in what sense the proposition holdeth true, *What is not warranted, that is unlawfull.* A thing is warranted in the worship of God three wayes: First by the light of nature and reason, according to the generall rules of scripture: and so time, place, method, phrase of speech, and such like, are warranted, though nothing be determined particularly thereof in scripture. For the scripture commandeth that all things be done in order, but it determineth not this or that to be matter of order. Thus a stinted Liturgie is warranted. Secondly, a thing is warranted by necessary consequence, when to some particular dutie required this or that particular is necessary or expedient, though it be not named: and so the translation of the scripture is warranted, because it must be read to edification; and edifie it cannot, unlesse it be understood. Thirdly, that is warranted which is by speciall institution commanded as a part or substantiall means of worship, which should be unlawfull if it was not particularly instituted, as being contrary to the second commandment. And seeing the word is thus

1. Cor. 11. 14.

thus diversly used in different matters, unlesse it be wisely distinguished a man shall build false conclusions upon true principles, if truly applied; and sooner entangle himself then confute his adversary: as it fareth with our brethren in this case. For taking the word *warranted* in the strictest sense, when they dispute against a set form or Liturgie, as an addition to the word, and means of worshipping God by the devises and appointment of men, they conclude erroneously: For a stinted Liturgie is no substantiall means of worshipping, or positive worship, (for these two are one) but onely a matter of order, or form of words and method, wherein we present our requests to God, &c. And from the same mistake they ensnare themselves, while they teach others to argue upon the same grounds and with like force against singing of psalmes and reading of set translations; to wit, That they are not warranted of God, and that we must be carefull, as not to take away from the word any ordinance of God, so not to adde to the word, as means of worshipping God, the devises and appointment of men. Out of which snare they can never rid themselves, unlesse they take the word *warranted* in a larger sense, and distinguish betwixt the substantiall and necessary means of worship, and that which is allowed by consequence onely, or doth pertain to the worship of God as a matter of order. For though singing of psalmes be commanded of God; though God allow, nay command, that the scriptures should be translated, as that without which they

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cannot

cannot be read to edification : yet the frame of words in singing, and the translation it self is the work of men, and the words and phrases the devises of men, not an ordinance of worship. This knot cannot be untied but it will cut the sinews of the former objection.

Object. 5.

Copy of a Letter, pag. 13.

Who put this instrument into your ministers hands? Christ in his Testament appointed none such, Answer.

Arg. answer. pag. 59.

Johnson, De precib. & lit. pag. 36, 37.

Answer.

Who seeth not, that the imposing of prayers devised by other men upon the churches, to be used of all ministers ordinarily for theirs and the churches prayers, doth much derogate from the honour, fruit and benefit of Christs ascension into heaven, and from the love, care and bounty that he hath and sheweth continually to his church upon earth, giving gifts to men for the work of the ministry and the profit of the churches: Eph. 4. 8, 13. 1. Cor. 12. 4, 5, 6. with Matth. 28. 20. Whatsoever derogateth from the honour, fruit and benefit of the ascension of Christ, that is wicked and unlawfull: But to read prayers out of a book derogateth from the honour, fruit and benefit of Christs ascension.

What is here said of imposing prayers devised by others, is alledged against the use of stinted prayers and Liturgie, and so must be understood: and till the use of a prescript form of prayer or Liturgie be proved unlawfull, it will never be found derogatorie to the honour, fruit and benefit of Christs ascension. Christ ascending up on high hath given gifts unto men for the work of the ministry, as well for prayer as for doctrine and preaching, adde also, for baptizing, administration of the Lords supper, catechizing, blessing, confession

confession and profession of faith, and singing of psalmes: And if a stinted form of prayer be derogatory to the honour of Christs ascension; for the same reason a stinted form in all or any of these is derogatory likewise. Christ hath given gifts unto men for doctrine or preaching: is it therefore unlawfull for the minister of the Gospel to make use of translations, commentaries, linguists, controversie-writers, &c. to help and furnish him the better in this work? is this to derogate from the fruit and benefit of Christs ascension? Ability to preach is a gift which Christ bestoweth upon his servants: but (I hope) they will not say he is unmeet to be a minister of Christ that doth penne his sermons, and ordinarily deliver them in that method and stinted phrase which he hath premeditated; or that his so doing is dishonourable to the fruit and benefit of Christs ascension. And it will be a difficult thing to give a substantiall reason why a stinted prayer and not a penned sermon should be so challenged. Christ hath given to his ministers ability to pray in their measure, but not in such measure as they should need no help; nor such abilities of speech or utterance, as that every minister should be so enabled to pray, in fitting words, according to present occasions, as not to need some help, studie and meditation, yea, to digest his meditations into a stinted form of words. And this stinted form delivered upon premeditation, out of memory, is a prescript form, in the judgement of our brethren. But let us grant (what can never be proved) that
every

every minister hath the gift of speech and utterance, that he needeth no help or furtherance upon any suddain occasion, what will follow? If they be so endued, it will be said, there is no warrant for others to prescribe, nor for themselves to reade over such stinted prayers. What not? An able minister hath discretion and wisdom to know what portion of scripture is meet to be read, and how much: hath the church no warrant then to appoint what books, chapters or sections shall ordinarily be read? nor the minister warrant to observe that appointment? A learned Grecian or Hebrician is able to translate a book or chapter in the Old or New Testament as well, peradventure better, then it is in our ordinary translations: may not the church then ordain one translation usually to be read? Let me intreat our brethren to view the strength of this reason in another of the same form, which I certainly perswade my self they will not allow; and it is this; Reading of translations in the worship of God is unlawfull, because it doth contradict the gifts bestowed by Christ upon the church for the work of the ministry, and derogateth from the vertue of Christs ascension and dignity of his kingdome, and blemisheth Christs bounty to, and care of his church, and may be performed by a child perfectly well. For it may be said, If Christ hath given gifts unto men for the work of the ministry, he hath given ability also to translate the scriptures, or else translations are not necessary: And if Christ hath given gifts to his servants to translate the scriptures, or translations

translations be not necessary, then they have no warrant to reade, nor others authority to prescribe any set translation. It may also be added, That God will be worshipped with our own, not with another mans; with that which cost us something, not with that which cost us nothing; with our own gifts, not with other mens. But for one ignorant of the originals to reade the translations, is to offer unto God that which cost him nothing, to serve God with other mens not with his own gifts. The conclusion our brethren will not acknowledge; but whatsoever they can soundly answer to the premisses will with the same labour untie the knot of their own argument.

God is to be served with the best. But a minister is enabled to pray better, according to the occasion, then possibly he can be in a stunted form.

Object. 6.

Cursed be the deceiver, which hath a male in his flock, and voweth and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing. If these ministers then, and others,

*Mal. 1. 14.
Robins. Justi-
fcat. against
Bern. pag. 475,
476.*

have a better sacrifice of prayer and thanksgiving then their service-book, (as their own practice both publick and private, when they have liberty, sheweth they have, and that so themselves judge) let them learn to fear him that is a great King, and whose name is terrible, even the Lord of hosts. The Lord will be worshipped with the best we have; and he is accursed that having a male for sacrifice doth offer a corrupt thing to the Lord, *Mal. 1. 14.*

*He is accursed
that bringeth
not the best
offerings that
he hath, Mal.
1. 14. Green-
wood, pag. 10.
Ainsw. Of the
use of the
Lords prayer.
See Paget, Ar-
row, c. 3.*

If this be granted, that every minister is enabled to pray better, according to the present occasion,

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then

then possibly he can be directed in a stinted form, (which can never be proved by text of scripture, or sound reason drawn from thence) in like manner a man may, and some have argued against the reading of translations; God will be served with the best we have: but there is no one translation the best we have; for a minister may be able to render a chapter, sentence or verse more significantly then the translation hath it: And yet (I suppose) no minister will refuse to use a sound and good translation, though it be here and there lesse significant; nor take liberty in reading to alter it at pleasure, lest liberty herein should teach gracelesse and ungodly people to wrangle against the scriptures themselves. In preaching and disputing men may and do note the significancy of the phrase, which cannot so fully be expressed in a translation; and more fully interpret what is not so plain and full as might be desired: but in reading the scriptures in the congregation great warinesse is to be used, lest boldnesse to correct occasion doubts in the weak, and embolden the ungodly to carp against religion. And if a minister may be tyed to the use of a sound & good translation, though not in every jot or tittle the best that may be, this reason hath lost its sinews. Universall propositions duly limited may be of great use, whereas if extended too farre, they are dangerous in application. It is true, if we speak of Gods incomprehensible goodnesse, excellency, glory and dominion, that more love and service is due to God then he requireth in his word, or possibly can be given

given by men or Angels : It is true , we are bound to whatsoever duty the Lord requireth in his law, for matter, manner and measure ; to whatsoever he obligeth us unto upon speciall occasion , or inciteth us unto by the heroicall motions of his Spirit, which must not be resisted : It is also most true, that the creature cannot merit of the Creatour ; much lesse can sinfull man , who faileth continually in his best duties , and offendeth in many things, supererogate by doing some outward act not required , or forbearing somewhat in it self allowable, when outwardly and inwardly he cometh short in many things commanded. But in every externall act, which is neither work of piety, mercy, nor justice , but onely an appertenance thereunto , or an outward prerogative onely , a Christian is not bound by the law of God evermore to do that which is best. There is a latitude and extent of the cōmandments , which God gave in bounty , wherein he requireth not all that he might , but what he pleaseth : and if we keep our selves within the bounds prescribed of God, we sin not. David did well in taking care for, and purposing to build the house of the Lord ; but seeing the Lord never spake word to David, saying, Build me an house , if that resolution had never come into his heart he had not sinned. They that sold their possessions , and laid the price at the Apostles feet , did very well ; whereas they might still have reteined their possessions without sin. He that hath the gift of continency doth best if he marry not, saith the Apostle, in respect of the pre-

2. Sam. 7. 7.

Acts 4. 37. &
5. 4.1. Cor. 7. 37,
38, 39.

Lev. 1. 3, 10.
 & 3. 1. & 4.
 3, 13.

sent occasion, and his own freedome : But if he marry, he sinneth not. The Law required a sacrifice without blemish : but simply the best in the flock it did not require. He is accursed that having a male for sacrifice doth offer a corrupt thing : but no such heavy doom is denounced against him who doth not offer simply the best male in his flock. The churches of God sin not in reteining their ancient confessions of faith and forms of catechismes, being sound, plain, and full in matters fundamentall, concerning faith and obedience, though some more exact, methodicall or perfect might be framed. If the excellency of one form exclude all others which have not the same measure or degree of exactnesse, it will not be easie for our brethren to resolve, how either to preach, or pray, or perform any other service to God at all. How shall a minister resolve himself, whether this be simply the best sermon that he can make, for matter the fittest, the exactest for method, most proper for phrase, profitable for composure? How shall a Christian resolve himself, whether it be best for him to pray ever so long as he shall be enabled, or to contract himself as occasions shall require? If a scrupulous Christian should enquire, whether he might use the Lords prayer at all, or use it onely and none other, he could expect no satisfactory answer from them that oppose a stinted form of prayer by this argument : For first they will tell him, He may use a petition, two, or more, or all in the Lords prayer, even word for word, if the holy Ghost.

Ghost directeth him: then, That the heads themselves in those petitions are so generall as no man can well for himself or others use them aright without some speciall relation or application to his or their particular estate or occasions; neither can any mans or churches case or understanding reach unto all things needfull for all occasions, times and persons, as those heads do comprehend: That our Saviour giveth us a rule and direction how to pray, but tyeth us not to that form: That the prayer cannot be ours properly if rehearsed, because we are to say, *Our father*, and all things necessary for our selves and others, for past and future times and conditions are comprehended in it: and, That if we ask all things comprehended in those petitions at one and the same time, we shall ask things contrary; which cannot be done in faith: Lastly, seeing it is a most perfect prayer, wherein is no want or superfluity, if it were Christs meaning to enjoin the saying over of these words for our prayer to God, then ought we to use these onely and none other; because it should be but babbling & presumption to joyn or put other prayers in stead of that which is so absolute and sufficient: for the Lord will be worshipped with the best we have, &c. Lay these things together, and what resolution can be gathered to that question but this, He may use it, He may not use it; He may use other prayers with it, When he useth it, he may use none other, because it is most perfect and sufficient. For answer it might be added, That in publick prayer the capacity and

*Ans. ubi su-
pra.*

*Johnson, pag.
24.*

Pag. 22.

*Ans. ubi su-
pra.
Greenwood,
Against Gif-
ford, pag. 19.*

edification of the people is more to be respected of the minister then his own ability of conceit or utterance: The phrase and disposition of words used in prayer in the assembly should rather be grave and simple then strained to the highest degree of fervency that the messenger of God is able. It is also to be considered, that what is simply best, is not best in relation to this or that circumstance or end: what is best in a time free, is not best in a time not free. And if a stinted form of Liturgie be not necessary to help the inability of the minister, it may be expedient upon other grave and weighty considerations, concerning the good of Gods church, both ministers and people.

Object. 7.

The imposition of set forms, so to be used for matter and manner by our ministers, hath a variation from, I may say, an opposition unto the law of fear and service, *sc.* That we should love the Lord with all our souls, all our strength, &c.

Answer.

That which is said of our form to be used for matter and manner, is altogether impertinent, or turneth the edge of the argument. For either all publick forms of prayer wherein a minister maketh not use of his own but other mens gifts be unlawfull and derogatorie to the honour, fruit and benefit of Christs ascension; and then it is impertinent to urge this of our form for matter and manner: Or some forms be lawfull notwithstanding a minister maketh not use of his own but other mens gifts; and then this is no just exception against the use of our Liturgie. For if any publick stinted form of prayer be lawfull, then ours
is

is lawfull so farre and in what it agreeth with that lawfull form for matter and manner : And what reason soever disproveth the use of ours for matter, manner, or what else soever can be objected, that disproveth the use of all set forms that be of the same nature and use for matter or manner. Thus therefore you may take the Argument, If some set or stinted form of prayer be lawfull ordinarily to be used without addition or alteration, though therein the minister make use not of his own but others gifts ; then our stinted form of prayer is not unlawfull because it is to be used ordinarily without addition or alteration, though therein the minister make use not of his own but of others gifts. For whatsoever maketh our form unlawfull, that maketh all forms agreeing with ours in that particular unlawfull : But the former hath been proved already.

Why may they not as lawfully command to preach by reading of Homilies, as to pray by reading of the Liturgie ? both which are contrary to the institution of Christ, and the holy scriptures. The two feet upon which the dumb ministry standeth, like Nebuchadnezzars image upon the feet of iron and clay, are the book of Common prayer, and of Homilies : the reading of the former (which is the right foot) serving them for Prayer, and the other, for Preaching : Which feet if they were smitten, as were the other, with the stone cut without hands, the whole Idole-priesthood would fall and be broken a-pieces, as that other image was.

Object. 8.

Johnson, ubi supra, pag. 37. Copy of a Letter, pag. 11.

Greenwood, ubi supra, pag. 28.

Read prayer mainteineth superstition & an Idole-ministry.

Robinson, Justific. pag. 47-48.

This

*Ans.**Johnson, p. 30.**See Chrysost. in Gen. Hom. 3, 4, 5, 6, 27, 28, 31. &c.**August. Tract. 9. in Job. Hesterno enim die &c. in hodiernum diem distulimus. &*

Tract. 12. Ex eo quodd hesterno die intentam fecimus, &c. Et Tract. 16. Hodierna Evangelica lectio hesterni diei sequitur lectionem quæ nobis proponitur ad disputandum. Tract. 21, 29, 35, 37, 50. Possidon. in vita August. cap. 21, &c. Aug. De verb. Dom. in Evang. serm. 15. De verb. Apost. serm. 5, 6. Literis carens Sactis non potest esse aptus officiis. Gratian. Dist. 36. can. 1, 2. Hæc duo sunt Pontificis opera, ut aut à Deo discat, legendo scripturas Divinas, & sæpius meditando; aut populum doceat. Origen. Hom. 6. in Levit. Gratian. Dist. 36. can. 3. Sacerdos namque ingrediens vel egrediens moritur, si de eo sonitus non auditur; quia iram contra se occulti Judicis exigit, si sine prædicationis sonitu incedit. Grat. Dist. 43. 1. Oves proculdubio tacendo pastor occidit. Greg. l. 1. epist. 33. Gratian. Dist. 43. can. 4, 5. Episcopus lectioni, & orationi, & verbi Dei prædicationi tantummodo vacet. Concil. Carthag. 4. can. 20. Grat. Dist. 88. can. 6. See Concil. Antioch. can. 17. 18. In omni sacerdotali convivio lectio Divinarum scripturarum misceatur. Per hoc enim & animæ ædificantur ad bonum, & fabulæ non necessariae prohibentur. Concil. Toletan. 3. can. 7. Gratian. Dist. 44. can. 11. Quia nequaquam lectioni studeas, nequaquam exhortationi invigiles, sed ipsum quoque usum ecclesiastici ordinis ignores; hoc est in testimonium, quodd eis sub quibus es politus servare reverentiam nescis. Greg. Natal. episc. l. 2. reg. ep. 14. Grat. Dist. 44. can. 5. Concil. Moguntiac. can. 25. Si forte Episcopus non fuerit in domo sua, aut infirmus est, aut aliqua causa exigente non valuerit, nunquam tamen desit diebus Dominicis &c. Chrysost. conc. 3. de Lazaro. Hom. 2, & 5. in Matth. & Hom. 10. in Job. Hom. 6, 8. in Gen. Et Hom. 5, & 6. ad populum Antiochen. Theodoret. De corrigend. Græcor. affect. l. 5. Hieron. in Epistaph. Paule. August. in cap. Jejun. Chrysost. in epist. ad Coloss. Hom. 9, & in Gen. 29. See Jewel, Against Hard. art. 15. div. 15. Sixt. Senens. Biblioth. Sanct. l. 6. annot. 152.

Of

Of their learning and zeal it is needlesse to say any thing. For three of them there is plentiful testimony that they preached every day in the week and yeare, at least once or twice, without fail: *Ye heard yesterday, Ye shall heare to morrow*, is common in their tractates and homilies. Augustine even to the extremity of his sicknesse preached the word of God in his church cheerfully and boldly, with a sound mind and judgement, without any intermission at all. The like diligence is noted in others who lived before and about those times: in all which a stinted Liturgie was in use. And generally the Fathers in the primitive church presse the knowledge of the scriptures, residence upon his charge, diligence in reading, meditation, prayer and instruction of the people, as duties requisite and necessary, and by no means to be neglected or omitted of the minister. They also exhort the people, not onely to heare the word of God, but to learn it by heart, to instruct and warn one another, to sing psalmes, conferre religiously, begin and end their feasts with solemn prayer, reade the scriptures in their houses and discourse thereof one with another for their mutual profit and edification; and to call their families, children, wives, servants, friends and neighbours together, and to repeat the sermons they heare at church together, after the sermon ended. Such exhortations are common and ordinary in them who approved stinted Liturgies: *Let one of you take in hand the holy book; and by the heavenly words, having called his neighbours about him, let*

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See Jewel, A-
pol. def. part.
5. chap. 3. div.
4. Cam.
Pansfr. tom. 1.
lib. 10. cap. 4.
5, 6, 7. &c.
Gregor. l. 4.
Epist. 44. Gra-
tian. Dist. 91.
can. 2. Phil.
Alorn. De Eu-
char. lib. 1.
cap. 4. Conc.
Coloniens. can.
12. Willet. Sy-
nop. Contr.
13. qu. 7.
Duranti Rati-
onal. l. 4. cap.
15.
Petrus de Ali-
aco, lib. De
reform. Eccl.
cap. De reform.
mat. Prelator.

2. Tim. 4. 3.

Whitak. in
Dur. lib. 8.
§. 10. 2.

him water and refresh both their minds and his own. Being at home we may both before and after meat take the holy books in hand, and thereof receive great profit, and minister spirituall food unto our souls. Gregorie disalloweth that such should attend to singing and modulation of the voice who should apply themselves to the office of preaching. Hierome cut short the lessons (when whole books were read in order before) that so there might be time for preaching. Durantus himself misliketh the men that *extra modum & ordinem orationes multiplicanti*, unde *auditores sibi ingratos efficiunt, & populum Dei potius fastidio avertunt quam alliciunt*. And Petrus de Aliaco counselleth *quod in Divina officio non tam onerosa prolixitas quam devota & integra brevisitas servaretur*. A stinted Liturgie then in it self doth not abbridge nor hinder the liberty of preaching or prayer according to the speciall present occasions, nor ought it so to do. For when the minister of the Gospel is bound to be instant in season and out of season, to teach, exhort, reprove with all long suffering and patience, these necessary and wholesome functions of the holy ministry must not be thrust out or hindred. And it is not hard to shew the wisdom and moderation of the churches in their prescribed catechismes, stinted prayers and exhortations, in the administration of the sacraments, &c. to be such, that they have allowed time convenient both for preaching and prayer, according as God hath enabled his messengers. In these times of this reformation, the pains of such whom

whom God stirred up first to preach the Gospel, and instruct the people in the wayes of salvation was almost miraculous, and yet generally they approved and devised a publick stinted form of Liturgie. As for Homilies, they were first allowed in the church, not to uphold or maintein an ignorant ministry, or to supply his defect that should take pains but would not, much lesse to shut out preaching; but to supply the casuall defect of preaching through the weaknesse and infirmitie of the minister.

Concil. Valsens.
2. An. Dom.
444. tom conc.
3. pag. 19.
Si presbyter
aliquis infir-
mitate prohi-
bente per seip-
sum non po-
tuerit prædi-
care sancto-
rum Patrum
homilia à di-
aconis reciten-
tur. *Caran.*
Sum. Concil.
Concil. Va-
sens. cap. 4.

CHAP. V.

A stinted form of prayer doth not quench the Spirit.

THE Spirit of Grace enableth us to pray, and maketh requests for us, but worketh by means: It instructeth us what to ask, not in what phrase of speech: It stirreth up in us holy desires, but giveth not abilitie suddenly and without help to expresse and lay open our hearts in fit method and words significant. As the Spirit doth perswade and assure the heart, that the scripture is the word of God, not witnessing of the letters, syllables and words, but of the matter and saving truth therein contained: So the Spirit instructeth us to pray, by opening our eyes to see our misery, and

4. *Arg.*

Isa. 59. 11.
Rom. 8. 26.

inflaming our hearts with a longing desire of mercy and relief, in the mediation of Jesus Christ; but it giveth not abilitie evermore to utter and expresse these our desires in fit and decent phrase of speech. Abilitie of speech is a common gift of the Spirit, which the Lord bestoweth upon good and bad: Yea, many times gracelesse persons are herein preferred before the most sincere and upright: and many an honest heart can cry aloud for mercy who is scarce able to utter one distinct and perfect sentence in fit words and order. Let no man except, that ministers have better abilities: For when the Apostle saith, *the Spirit is given to help our infirmities, who know not how to pray as we ought*, he speaketh of all beleevers, as well others as ministers, private prayers as well as publick: And whosoever is enabled or provoked to lift up any one sigh or grone unto God, or to make apologie for himself in the mediation of Christ in any manner, it is by the holy Ghost. These things considered, I suppose all men will grant; 1. That it is lawfull for a man beforehand to meditate on his own particular wants and the necessities of others, and that he may more fully understand and more sensibly be affected with them, to reade good books, which unfold the particular sinnes against the law of God, the state of man by nature, and the condition of the Saints, and of the church, as also to think upon the works of Gods providence, and how he is pleased to deal with his people in all places. 2. The better to stirre up confidence and affection,
and

and to furnish himself with words and matter, it is not unlawfull nor unprofitable to reade the prayers of the godly, registred in holy scripture, or published in other godly books; to observe the matter of their prayer, their ferventnesse in praying, and the arguments wherewith they pressed their suits and contended for audience. 3. After a man hath collected matter for prayer by meditation and reading, he may studie to digest it into due order and method, and to expresse his requests in fit and decent speech, and the same so conceived he may utter as a prayer, according as occasion shall offer it self. The reason may be thus contracted, If the Spirit of God doth work by means and stir up good desires, but giveth not abilitie to expresse our desires in fitting significant words, then it is lawfull for us to use all godly means to stirre up the graces of God in us, and premeditate how we may utter our requests in such form and manner as may best serve for our quickning and the edification of others. And if the use of a premeditated form of words in prayer do not stint the Spirit in a sinfull manner, a set form of prayer cannot be condemned as injurious to the Spirit.

The Spirit of God is the onely sufficient help which God giveth us to help our infirmities in the time of prayer, Rom. 8. 26. Gal. 4. 6. Zech. 12. 10.

We confesse most willingly, that prayer is not a work of nature, wit or learning, but of the Spirit of grace. True desire or abilitie to pray is not bred in us by nature, nor procured and gotten by

Object. 1.
Copy of a Letter, pag. 13. 14.
Robins. p. 469.
Johnson, uti
supra, pag. 37.
Ans.

*Greenwood,
Against Gif-
ford, pa. 3, 4.
It is the Spirit
of God in the
very action of
prayer that
helpeth our
infirmities.*

our study and industry, but proceedeth onely from the holy Ghost, as the authour and efficient: and this is proved by the places quoted. But ability to pray standeth in the lifting up of the soul unto God, not in the ample expression of our desires, according to the various occasions in fit words, and pressing them with forcible arguments. Prayer is the immediate work of the Spirit: But no text of scripture doth in such sense make the holy Ghost the authour of prayer, or helper of our infirmities, as that it should be unlawfull to make use of outward means to furnish the soul with matter, stirre up the graces of God in the heart, and blow the coals of the Spirit: For then we must not reade the scriptures, nor other godly books; we may not meditate, or conferre, the better to fit us for prayer. Peradventure it will be said the Spirit of God is our onely helper in the time of prayer; so that at other times we may use helps to stirre up the graces of the Spirit, but not in the time of prayer. And if this distinction be found in scripture, or by sound reason may be deduced out of scripture, we must hearken unto it: but if it be of our selves, whiles we pleade against the devises of men, we maintein devises. The Spirit of grace is at all times the sole mover and enabler of us to pray: and the use of lawfull helps, and such as suite with the nature of prayer, are at no time unlawfull. As it is fit to meditate and reade before we pray, so in prayer it is lawfull to kneel, lift up the eyes and hands, use the help of the voyce, and the benefit of a Christian friend,

to stirre up affection. Therefore for the lawfulnessse of book-prayer we may dispute thus, If it be lawfull to use externall helps in time of prayer the better to stirre up affection, then book-prayer is not to be condemned for this, that the Spirit of God is the onely or sufficient help that God giveth to help our infirmities in the time of prayer: But it is lawfull to use externall helps in time of prayer.

The Spirit alone either immediately, or by means sanctified and ordained by himself, maketh requests for us: yea, it is by the immediate teachings and suggestions of the Spirit that all our requests must be put up, no other helps are mentioned, or can be collected in the present action of prayer.

Object. 2.

Copy of a Letter, pag. 14.

Robins. pag. 472.

Greenwood, Against Giff. pag. 2.

I will not stand to enquire how these things can agree together; what is meant by the immediate teachings of the Spirit; or how the Spirit maketh requests, either immediately, or by means. The Spirit alone, and that immediately, is the authour of prayer; but by means he ministreth varietie of matter, order, and words. But what are we to understand by *means sanctified and ordained by himself*? If means ordained by speciall institution, it is too strait and hard to conceive what they be. If means allowed by God, as those whereby we may furnish our selves with words and matter for prayer, as reading godly books, conference, meditation on the works of God, &c. a stinted form of prayer is a means sanctified. And here I desire it may be noted, in what sense a form of prayer is called

Answer.

called *a means or furtherance*; not as a means or form of worship properly so called, but as in fit words and phrases it presenteth to our minds or memories what we ought to beg agreeable to the word of God: as the frame of words and matter kept in memory may be called and is reputed a stinted form.

Object. 3.

Greenwood,
pag. 21.

A stinted form of prayer quencheth the Spirit. It is a quenching of the Spirit, to reade another mans prayer upon a book.

Ans.

That quencheth the Spirit which is as water to cool or allay or extinguish the heat of that holy fire; which cannot be imputed to a set form of prayer, either by authoritie of scripture, or sound reason. Reading godly books is an exercise profitable to stirre up the graces of Gods Spirit in us: were it not a wonder, if reading a godly prayer should produce the contrary effect? As in the ministry of the word the corruption of mans heart and the hainousnesse of sinne may more lively and fully be discovered for his humiliation then he is able of himself to set it forth; so in prayer penned by a godly and well experienced Christian the case of a distressed soul may more pithily and amply be deciphred and anatomized then he of himself is able to lay it open. And in such case to deny this lawfull help, is to take away a crutch from the lame, and bread from the hungry. In the very act of prayer it is lawfull to use outward helps, whereby we may be enabled to pray better; and shall it not be lawfull for a burdened soul perplexed with doubtings, overwhelmed with bitter anguish,

anguish, to use the help of a book, that he might the better unfold and lay open his misery into the bosome of his loving Father? The ample and particular laying open of our necessities doth ease the heart, and move affections: and when this may be done better by the help of a book in prayer then of our selves, how can the use thereof be accused as the quenching of the Spirit? It is the Spirit indeed that doth help us in our infirmities; but we must use means to stirre up the graces of the Spirit in us. He quencheth not the Spirit who laboureth to blow the coals of grace, and useth all helps afforded in most ample and particular manner to unburden his heart before the Lord. He doth not substitute his Christian friends in the place of the word and Spirit, who not able to lift up his own soul by reason of grievous straitnesse and pressure of heart, doth crave his help and assistance in prayer: And may not a godly book supply the lack of a Christian companion? When we are dull and out of order, we may joyn with others in prayer for our relief and quickning: why then should it be intolerable to make this benefit of a godly book? A set form of prayer may be committed to memory and uttered from it; doth that also quench the Spirit? *It is not safe (they say) for a minister to limit himself alwayes to one form of prayer though devised by himself.* But if it be a quenching of the Spirit, an humane invention forbidden in the second commandment, if it cannot be made by the Spirit, if it be not that true and spirituall worship which God requireth, it is not
O lawfull

Copy of a Letter,
pag. 15.

lawfull ordinarily nor once, for minister or private christian, in publick or private, in case of distresse or otherwise: for the objection is generall, That all stinted forms of prayer do quench the Spirit: and these mitigations of *safe, alwayes, and for a minister*, are a plain concession there is no force in the reason.

Object. 4.

*Robinson, A-
gainst Bern.
Pag. 429.*

These stinted forms do quench the Spirit of prayer, in that they deprive the church and minister of that libertie of the Spirit of prayer which God would have them use; stinting the minister, yea all the ministers of the kingdome, to the same measure of the Spirit, not onely one with another, but all of them with him that is dead and rotten.

Ans.

Nothing is here objected against our stinted form which may not with like truth be alledged against the reading of a prescribed and set translation, the use of the Lords prayer, a set form of blessing, singing of psalms, and baptizing in these precise words, *I baptize thee, &c.* For in these things it may be said, The minister, yea all the ministers in the kingdome are stinted to the same measure of the Spirit, &c. And if in those particulars that form of reasoning be of no weight, in this it is but an empty sound. A stinted form depriveth not the minister or church of that libertie of the Spirit which God would have them use, seeing they may use that notwithstanding, as the severall occasions of the church or people shall require. If all ministers throughout the Christian world should put up the same holy and just petitions

tions to God, in the same phrase of speech as in the words of the Lords prayer, they should neither stint the Spirit to one measure, nor deprive the church of the liberty of the Spirit, seeing the measure of the Spirit standeth not in words and forms, but in fervent sighs and groans; and they have time and libertie to pray besides, as God shall enable them, and the present occasions of the assembly require. And if it must needs be that in a stinted form the Spirit is stinted to one measure, then all stinting of the Spirit is not quenching of the Spirit: For the minister doth not quench the Spirit if he stint it, in respect of time and occasions. Suppose sundry private Christians in the assembly do excell their pastour in the gift of prayer, the wife excell the husband, the child or servant excell the master or governour; is the Spirit quenched in them, when it is stinted for the time to their measure in prayer? Suppose, divers Christians meeting upon occasion, the weakest in gifts be put to pray for the rest; is the Spirit in them quenched because it is stinted to his measure?

The question is not of prayer devised by a mans self, or of limiting the Spirit in the people; but of prayer devised by others and imposed, and of limiting the Spirit of the minister: the first is lawfull; the second sinfull.

*Object. 5.
Copy of a Letter, pag. 15.*

The question is of a publick stinted form of prayer or Liturgie, Whether it quench the Spirit in the minister or the people; and, Whether it quench the Spirit because it stinteth it. Whether

Ans.

the form be devised by others or by a mans self, imposed or voluntarily taken up, that is nothing to the matter in hand : but, Whether it quench the Spirit, because for the time it is limited to that form of words. And if we look into the matter it self, the Spirit of God may be quenched in a mans self no lesse by the rude customary use of a form devised by a mans self then by a form imposed by others, and it may be as prejudiciall to the comfort of Gods people. And if we consult the scripture, where shall we find this distinction, of limiting the Spirit by prayer devised by a mans self or devised of others ; of stinting the Spirit in respect of time, occasion, form of prayer, uttered out of memory or read upon a book? But the distinction it self hath been confuted already, together with the assertion, That a stinted prayer doth quench the Spirit. *It cannot properly be said, saith one, that the Spirit is limited by his own ordinance : but when the Spirit of the minister is straitned by forms prescribed to him by men without Gods ordinance and appointment, then the Spirit is limited and stinted indeed.* But this is a bare repetition of what was said before, without proof or reason : and besides a strange description of limiting the Spirit, is nothing but a proof of one thing by the same. And here I desire two things may be noted. First, though many reasons in shew be brought against the use of stinted prayer, yet when the matter cometh to the upshot, they are barely one, and that nakedly affirmed ; Stinted prayer is unlawfull, because in reading book prayer he doth not exercise his

Idem, ubi supra.

his own but another mans gifts. Is this reason good? No; for in reading scripture out of a translation he exerciseth another mans gifts. But stinted prayer is the devise of man. A child of twelve or thirteen yeares old may reade a stinted prayer as well as the minister: The same may be said of reading the Scriptures. But stinted prayer is the devise of man. It is unlawfull to stint the Spirit: Yet this is done in praying with others. But stinted prayer is the devise of man. So that all hangeth upon this string, for the confirmation whereof nothing is alledged. Secondly, they take that for granted evermore which should be proved, or prove the same by the same: as, Stinted prayer doth quench the Spirit. Why so? Because the Spirit is straitned by forms deviiled by men: which is as much in plain terms as to say, It is stinted in our sense because it is stinted. And the like might be noted in other arguments.

Where is the consideration of the people had, when the forms now are the same for matter and manner that they were almost an hundred yeares ago, and at the first dawning of the Gospel, the same for the Court, Universities, and the meanest congregation in the Countrey? *Object. 6.*

Might not the same be objected against the use of a set translation, singing of psalmes, the use of the Lords prayer for this fifteen hundred yeares without alteration? for these are the same now that they were many yeares ago, or at least may be: the same for Citie, Countrey, Court, Univerſitie, and the meanest villages? There are some *Ans.*

common blessings which we and others dayly stand in need of, and those it is lawfull to ask dayly in a set form of words. Thus we may pray euery day for encrease of faith, patience, love, meeknesse, the forgivnesse of sinnes, the continuance of those outward blessings which we enjoy, freedom from or victory over temptations, &c. Thus there is no petition in the Lords prayer which doth not alwayes, in the main, concern every Christian mans estate. And if the matter of our prayers may be the same daily, in the Citie & the Countrey, Court and Universitie, in this and former ages, the same phrase of speech, method and form externall may be lawfull, fit and expedient. For it is not the repetition of the same words in prayer every day that displeaseth the Lord, but the ignorant, rash, cold, customary, superstitious and irreverent pouring out of words before him, that is distastfull to his Majesty. Variety of phrase doth not delight the Lord: neither will he reject the desires of an humble and contrite heart because they are tendred often in one and the same phrase of speech. And if the matter of prayer be the same in places of greatest wealth and poorest condition, and the same form of blessing, baptizing, singing of psalms and putting up their petitions to God be fit and decent for them all; it can be no prejudice to a stinted Liturgie that it is the same in all places, and throughout all ages, if the language be the same. For this doth argue it to be the more not the lesse fit, and that the greater not the lesse regard is had to the people. The reason in brief is this; It is lawfull to ask the same common blessings of God every day, in all assemblies and
con-

congregations, both of the City & Country, Court and University, met together to call upon God: therefore the same stinted form of prayer or Liturgy may be lawfull in the greatest city and meanest village, in this and the ages following, whether read or uttered out of memory: for pronouncing cannot make an evil matter good; nor reading simply make prayer good and holy to become sinfull.

Publick prayers offered up by the minister in the church-assemblies must be framed according to the present and severall occasions of the church and people of God: which cannot be done when men are stinted to those forms.

Occasions are ordinary and common; or more speciall. In a stinted form prayers may be offered up by the minister according to the common and ordinary occasions of the church and people of God assembled, though not according to the speciall occasions, which may happen now and then, or more particularly concern this or that person. For if the same blessings are dayly to be craved, he prayeth according to the present occasions that asketh the same blessings of God. If it be said, There be many occasions of particular use for the congregation and others, which are not mentioned expressly: that proveth not, That a man cannot in a stinted form pray according to the severall occasions; but, that some stinted forms do not meet with all and every particular occasion: which is easily granted. But if a stinted form meet not with every mans occasions, or not so particularly as it ought, doth it hence follow that in a stinted form a man cannot pray according to the present occasions at all? If this be the

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Object. 7.

*Cople of a Letter pag. 21.
Greenwood,
Against Giff.
pag. 24.*

Answer.

conclusion, I fear we shall find few conceived prayers which must not come under the same sentence. It may argue the imperfection of a stinted form, not the unlawfulness; it maketh somewhat against the sole use of a set form at all times; against the simple use it maketh nothing.

Object. 8.

Johnson, ubi

supra, pag. 28.

Greenwood,

Against Giff.

Preface to the

reader.

Ans.

It is found by lamentable experience, that when men began to observe that custome, there was great quenching of the Spirit, and very few there were who did know and observe the true nature and the manner of prayer.

How is this confirmed by experience? If ever the Christian church had no stinted form of prayer, lamentable experience will testifie what great coolings and decayes there was in the church before a stinted form was in use. If ever the faithfull did by the Spirit of adoption cry, *Abba, Father*, they have learned to pray by the Spirit since the use of a stinted form as well as before. Whatsoever may be thought of the two first ages; for the space of fourteen hundred yeares the churches have had their stinted Liturgies: The reformed churches, since God was pleased to restore light again to the world, have approved a stinted Liturgie: Was there none or few in all this tract of time who did know or understand the true nature or manner of prayer? none or few that in spirit or truth did call upon the name of the Lord? The securitie of all ages hath been lamentable both before and since the use of a stinted form: but, that a stinted form was the cause of securitie and dulnesse, can never be proved.

CHAP. VI.

In scripture there be prescript forms of blessing, prayers, salutations, &c. which may lawfully be used.

IN scripture we find prescript forms of blessing, prayers, and thanksgiving, both ordinary and extraordinary, approved of God, which might be used by the priests, Levites, and Saints or faithfull people, and that upon deliberation, usually, constantly, as occasion was offered, and not by the immediate motion of the Spirit. I say not, that the priests in blessing, or the Saints in prayer, were necessarily bound to those very words and syllables: But they might lawfully use them and without sinne. We find also stinted forms of salutations, valedictions, and blessing, which have been often used, and may lawfully be used still without variation; though we be not necessarily obliged thereunto. Our Saviour also prescribed a set form of baptizing, which we observe constantly without addition or variation; though we be not tied by absolute necessity to rehearse the same words in the same syllables. No substantiall change is to be admitted which may alter the sense: but the very form of speech, as whether we say, *I baptize*, or as the Greek church, *Beshou baptized*, &c. is not of like necessitie: neverthelesse we may and do constantly use this form, *I baptize*, &c. without addition or variation at any time. Our

Argum. 5.

Num. 6. 22, 23.

Psal. 22. 1. & 102.

Hose. 14. 23.

Joel. 2. 17.

Deut. 16. 5, 10

Psal. 92. 1.

Ezra 3. 10.

Rev. 19. 3.

1. Chro. 29. 30.

Isa. 12. 1.

Rom. 1. 7.

1. Cor. 1. 3.

2. Cor. 1. 2.

Gal. 1. 3.

Ephes. 1. 2.

Phil. 1. 2.

1. Thess. 1. 1.

2. Thess. 1. 2.

Rom. 16. 24.

1. Cor. 1. 16, 23.

Phil. 4. 23.

2. Thess. 5. 18.

2. Thess. 3. 18.

Matth. 28. 19.

Willet, Synopf.

contr. 12. qu. 2.

& contr. 11.

qu. 1. Append.

Whitak. De sacr. Bapt. qu. 1. pag. 221, 222. Camier. Panstr. tom. 4. De Bapt. lib. 5. cap. 3. §. 5. Piscator, in Matth. 28. 19. Schol. Maldonat. in Matth. 28. 19.

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argument from these places is this; If a set form of blessing, thanksgiving, salutation, and administration of baptisme be lawfull to be used ordinarily without addition or variation; then a stinted form of prayer, to be used ordinarily without addition or alteration, is not unlawfull: But a prescript form of blessing, thanksgiving, salutation, and administration of baptisme, to be used ordinarily without addition or alteration, is not unlawfull.

Object. 1. There is apparent difference betwixt prayer and blessing: For prayer is expressed from men to God; but blessing is pronounced from God to men. Prayer may be performed by one equall to another, by an inferiour to a superiour, yea by a man to himself: but blessing is alwayes from the greater to the lesse. And Solomon used a different gesture in praying and in blessing the people.

*Copy of a Letter, pag. 6.
Robins. Against Bern. pag. 466.
Johnson, pag. 12.*

Ans. Let prayer and blessing differ in these and other particulars as many as they please; in this they agree, that they are both parts or branches of worship: And if a stinted form be disallowed in the one, it is unlawfull in the other: if it be a devise of man to be condemned in the one, it cannot be approved in the other: And therefore seeing a prescript form of blessing is lawfull, a stinted form of prayer is not to be condemned.

Object. 2. Moses did not prescribe unto the priests a form of words whereunto they must be tyed in blessing of the people, but onely gave them a rule of direction according to which they should blesse them: For otherwise the priests had sinned, whensoever

*Copy of a Letter, pag. 6.
Johnson, ubi supra, pag. 12,
14.*

soever

soever, pronouncing the blessing, they had used other words. And the particle, *Thus, So, or In this manner*, denoteth the form or similitude of the things whereof there is mention, &c. It is a troublesome thing that these ministers thus urge the letter of the scriptures, as if the question were not about their sense and interpretation; which they should prove to be for their stinted service, &c. but the question is, whether Moses tyed and stinted the priests to that form of words in blessing the people. The like they say of the form of baptisme.

*Greenwood,
Against Giff.
pag. 7, & 16.
Robinson,
Against Bern.
pag. 469, 470.*

*Johnson, pag.
28, 29.*

Answe.

*2. Chron. 5. 13.
with Psal. 131
Jer. 33. 11.
with Ezra 3.
10, 11.*

*Luke 10. 5.
Ruth 2. 4.*

It sufficeth, that these forms of blessing, prayer, and thanksgiving, and administration of baptisme, might or may be used; though in conscience neither the priests then nor we at this day are necessarily tyed unto them in so many precise words: For the lawfull not the necessary use of a prescript form of prayer or Liturgie is now in question: which is proved by the places above rehearsed, and not gainsaid at all by this answer. For if the Saints in former times might pray unto or praise the Lord in a stinted form of words invented by themselves or indited by others, as we find they might and did; if the priests might use a stinted form of words in blessing the people, whereunto they were not tyed; if Christians may salute one another in this stinted form of words, *Peace be unto you, The Lord be with you, The Lord blesse thee*, though they be not tyed thereunto, nor can reach every particular comprehended in those short sentences recorded in scripture; then a stinted form

of prayer or blessing, in words invented by themselves or indited by others, is lawfull to us: for in that particular the ground and reason is common to them and us. Apply this answer to the reason, That the priest might use that form without variation, but was not tyed unto it, That we may use the Lords prayer without alteration, and the form of baptisme without addition and diminution, but are not necessarily obliged to use the very words and syllables precisely; and I know not how they should tye the knot faster. For is not this in plain terms to confesse, That an arbitrarie stinted form is lawfull but not necessary? If God had commanded a form, it onely had been necessary; if God had determined one precise form, that onely and none other had been lawfull: but seeing he hath commanded none, determined none precisely, but left us free to use those recorded in scripture, or some others in the selfsame or other words, a stinted form is apparently warranted of God though not commanded.

Fulc. in Rhem. in 1. Cor. 14. S. 14. Calvin. in Matth. 6.9. Noluic præscribere filiis Dei quibus verbis utendū sit, ut ab ea quam dictavit formula deflectere non liceat.

Object. 3. Johnson, p. 14. Greenw. pag. 14, 15. Copy of a Letter, pag. 8, 9, 17. Robinson, Against Bern. pag. 473.

Ans.

It followeth not, that a prescript form devised by man is lawfull, because a form prescribed of God is good. Moses was a prophet, and had an immediate commission from God for what he appointed in the house of God: which the imposers of the Liturgie cannot plead. Christs ordinance can make the writings of the Apostles a rule of faith: can men make another scripture? &c.

A form prescribed and determined by God is not onely lawfull and good, but necessary and onely lawfull, as it is prescribed: which prerogative

tive no form devised or prescribed by man can participate. But when God is pleased to give a form for direction onely, and neither to command it precisely nor to determine it as the onely allowable for words and syllables, in that case this reason is good, That seeing the forms set down in scripture may lawfully be used though not prescribed, therefore a stinted form is not unlawfull. And thus we conclude from these passages of holy writ, The stinted forms of blessing, prayer, thanksgiving, and baptizing set down in scripture are lawfull to be used, though not prescribed of God as necessary; therefore a stinted form of prayer is not unlawfull. For that form of words which is neither determined nor commanded of God as necessary, but left at liberty to be used or not, that is not in point of conscience absolutely more lawfull then another sound and grave. If no form of words be determined or commanded, any form just and good, one as well as another, is free in conscience. Gods commandment maketh a thing necessary; his determination maketh it onely and none other lawfull: but a form not tying to the words precisely, but given for direction onely, doth authorize any other for matter the same and different onely in words or phrase of speech. Every stinted form of prayer or blessing, &c. not prescribed of God or ordained of him, is an humane devise, though the matter be good and the words be gathered out of the scripture; because whatsoever is not from heaven, is of men; what is not of God by his institution prescribed or appointed,

that our brethren conclude to be humane : But no prescript form of blessing, prayer, or praise, &c. is appointed of God and commanded as necessary to be used of all or any man at all times, as they confesse and labour to convince : Therefore it necessarily followeth, That if one godly form of prayer or blessing may constantly be used, another for matter the same, though different in phrase of speech, may be used also as occasion shall require : For none is absolutely commanded ; and all things required by the word of God in prayer may be observed in the one no lesse then in the other. In this whole answer therefore, which cometh so often in the second branch, they strengthen our reason as much as can be desired against themselves : In the other they look not to the point in hand nor the force of the reason.

Object. 4.

Those forms mentioned 2. Chron. 29. 30. are in the same place expressly said to be composed by those that were Prophets and Seers, as in other places, of purpose as it were to prevent imitation, an ordinary rise to imagery.

Ans.

The forms mentioned were given no question by the inspiration of the Spirit ; and so is the Lords prayer, the form of baptizing, and other psalmes registred in holy scripture : But the application of those particular forms to this or that purpose was not by an extraordinary motion of the Spirit, but upon grounds common to others with them, upon like occasion, or in cases analogicall. And if in that respect it be not lawfull to imitate their practice, I would gladly know by what

what warrant we sing the psalmes of David or other holy prophets inspired of God, or use a set translation, &c. Upon what grounds may they compose a catechisme for the edification of the people of their particular charge, or gather together and alledge scriptures in their studied sermons, either for instruction, exhortation, rebuke or comfort? If they have not warrant from these and such like practices of the people of God, it will prove in their construction but the precept or devise of man. The composure of those psalmes was by the immediate inspiration of the holy Ghost, wherein no man not immediately inspired may presume to imitate them: but forms given by inspiration are thus farre for our imitation, that we may use the same words or other words devised of our selves to the same purpose, *sc.* to expresse and lay open the conceits and desires of our soul. Hezekiah did not compose that form, but commanded the Levites to make use of it being already composed. But how imitation herein should be a rise to imagery I cannot conceive. To adde unto or detract from the word of God or his ordinances, is great presumption: to imitate the Saints in that particular which they did by immediate inspiration, and could not do without such inspiration, is intolerable boldnesse: But where God hath given a pattern of prayer, thanksgiving, or administration of the sacraments, to imitate our samplar in the selfsame words or other words devised by our selves or others, is no rise to imagery. If this be a rise to imagery,
every

every time a Christian maketh use of the Lords prayer in his prayers, or the prayers of holy men recorded in scripture, he setteth up an image; he that deviseth a set form of prayer for one that needeth, and he that in case of necessity useth such a devised prayer, setteth up an image; and every time they pray, preach, catechize, administer the sacraments, or meditate of holy things with reference to the scripture, they set up images. These consequences, I am assured, they detest: let me entreat them to consider whether they do not follow necessarily upon their premisses.

Object. 5.

Those that mean to defend the imposition of a stinted form of prayer to any purpose, do what they can to bear us in hand that these prayers are of like nature with those in scripture, and speak of them as if the composition and framing of them were by some propheticall or apostolicall Spirit, or at least (which will be all one in effect) by a Spirit or gift extraordinary.

Answ.

What opinion the true church of God hath had of a stinted Liturgie, we shall see in the next argument: But that she hath ever or at any time borne us in hand that those prayers were of like nature with those in the scriptures, that is, given by immediate inspiration, or parts of canonicall scripture, is an unjust imputation. For they know that all reformed churches, since the light of the Gospel began to shine forth unto the world untill this day, do allow and maintein the use of stinted prayers, catechismes, confessions and professions of faith, a stinted form of singing psalmes, &c. did ever any
of

of them bear the world in hand that their prayers or composures are propheticall or from an extraordinary spirit? Divers godly and learned ministers have soundly and to purpose mainteined the lawfulnessse of a stinted form against them of the Separation in former times; did they ever write or speak, that the prayers or Liturgie was framed by an Apostolicall spirit? I have not seen all men that have written upon this subject upon any occasion, and therefore cannot say that never any man did so speak of them: but sure I am, if any man have so written, he is neither the onely man, nor the chief, which hath set his hand to maintein the expediency of a stinted Liturgie. If any one hath spoken unadvisedly, the cause hath no credit by his defense, nor can it receive prejudice by his weaknesse. It hath been objected against some dislikers of a stinted form, that they conceit their extemporany prayers to come from the immediate inspiration of the holy Ghost; and if a man should rake into every writing, and set every speech upon the tentours, he might say as much for it as can be said in this particular. But at the best this is but to go about the bush. This is that which I hold and plead for, That by the word of truth a stinted Liturgie or form of prayer is allowable and in some respects expedient.

CHAP. VII.

The churches of God have both used and approved a stinted Liturgie.

6. Argum.

See Paul. Burgens. in Psal. 112.

Joseph. Scalig. De emendat. tempor. l. 6.

Beze Annot. major. in Matth. 16. 10.

Drus. Præterit. lib. 1. in Matth. 16. 30.

Ainsw. Annot. in Exod. 12. v. 8.

Muscul. in Psal. 95. Apparet hunc psalmum ecclesiasticæ congregationi, præsertim frequentiori, destinatum: qualis erat apud Judæos die Sabbati. Moller. in Psal. 95. 1. Apparet autem ex verbo **וְלִפְתָּח**, psalmum hunc non in privatum usum scriptum, sed sacris conventibus destinatum fuisse, quando populus frequens ad templum conveniebat. Fulc. in 1. Cor. 14. §. 12. It is not certain whether they had any set form of Liturgie: and if they had any, the same ought to have been in one tongue ordinarily. Fulc. 1. Cor. 14. §. 10. Petrus Diaconus and the rest that were sent from the East to Rome in their book to Fulgentius and other Bishops of Africk, cap. 8. do rehearse a prayer of Basils Liturgie, which they say almost the whole East frequented. These words, **LIFT UP YOUR HEARTS**, and, **WE LIFT THEM UP UNTO THE LORD**, were anciently in use, if not from the age of the apostles. Clem. lib. 8. Constitut. apost. cap. 15.

Object. 1.

Copy of a Letter, p. 5, & 12.

There is no mention from Moses to Christ of any Liturgie devised by man: Which might not have been concealed, if it had been for the edification

tion of the church to set up such means of worship, as Liturgies read publickly for the prayers of the church.

That there was no prescribed Liturgie particularly ordained and determined of God, is freely confessed: but, that there was none in use, is not proved by the silence of the scripture. For the scripture was given to be the perfect rule of faith and manners; but setteth not down particular customs or observations, according to the generall rules of religion. To let passe many, take this one for instance, The ordinary reading of the Law in the assemblies upon the Sabbath is not commanded by Moses either to the priests or Levites; no mention is found of any such practice for a long time together: We find not for a long time that the Jews had any synagogues for the ordinary assembling of the people; and the Law could not be read in their synagogues untill they were built: Will our brethren hence conclude, either that the scriptures were not read in the assemblies, or that it was a devise of man to read them in their synagogues? It is not good to lay grounds for such conclusions.

If Mr Ainsworths testimony be of any value, then mark what he testifieth from the famous Jew Maimonic (in *Misneh* treatise of prayer) That the church of the Jews had no stinted Liturgie, Annot. on Deut. 6. 13. *Our wise men have said (saith Maim.) What service is this with the heart? It is prayer. And there is no number of prayers by the Law, neither is there any set form of this by the Law, &c.*

Q 2

If

*Ans.**Deut. 31. 9, 10, 11.**Act. 15. 21.**Psal. 74. 8.*

Synagogas, id est, domos conventuum sacrorum, ubi legebatur lex, Pisc. scholas & synagogas, quæ passim in urbibus erant constitutæ, Moll. Heribach.

Object. 2.

Answ.

If Mr Ainsworth be not crosse to himself, he cannot deny the use of a stinted form amongst the Jews in the celebration of the passeover; of a stinted form free and voluntary, not necessary, as prescribed of God. And that which is here cited out of Maimonic is no way repugnant thereunto: For he speaketh not of the passeover, or any observations in the celebration thereof; but of prayer, and that private by one alone, and not publick in the assembly or congregation. Now the Jews might well use a stinted form in the celebration of the passeover, when yet by the law there was no number set nor form prescribed for private prayer. These two may well agree.

Object. 3.

After long search no copy can be found of any stinted Liturgie in use among the Jews till they ceased to be the church of God: which is a poore and weak proof of the lawfulnessse of a stinted Liturgie amongst Christians.

Answ.

It followeth not, that they never had or used a set form because it is not to be found at this day: For many monuments of antiquity are perished. Again, though forms, which now are extant, were not entire as now they be untill they ceased to be a church; yet many things contained in them might be in use before. So it is in the counterfeit Liturgies which goe under the name of James, Mark, Basil, and Chrysostom: they contein many things which shew the whole composure to be late in comparison, whereas divers things in them mentioned were of more ancient use in the church of God. And if this do not please, though there
never

never was any stinted Liturgie or form of prayer to be used in all their synagogues and assemblies, yet that is no reason to question the truth of that which the learned have observed touching the stinted form used in the celebration of the passe-over, and the probabilities (at least) they bring to shew that our Saviour Christ approved the same: which is all that is affirmed in the argument, and maketh more for the lawfulnessse of a stinted form of Liturgie, then any thing that hath been objected, against it.

As for the reformed churches, we are not to consider what they do, but what they ought to do. *Object. 4. Copie of a Letter, pag. 21.*

Shall I in your heart be pressed with the multitude of churches? *Greenwood, pag. 17.* then heare what the Lord saith, *Thou shalt not follow a multitude, &c.*

It is most true: but we must consider wisely, *Ans.* and not censure unadvisedly. The churches of God are companies of men called out of this world, in part onely inlightned, subject to errour: they have erred, they may erre: their sole testimony cannot be the ground of divine faith and assurance: Nevertheless the constant judgement of the churches of God for many ages in a matter of this nature, in the times of reformation, when clouds and darknesse are expelled, when the sunne is risen, and great light given to the scriptures by the benefit of languages, translations and commentaries; I say, the judgement of the churches at these times, and in a matter of this nature, is not lightly to be regarded. A man should try and examine his grounds and reasons and mistrust himself rather

rather then so many wise, learned and godly sweetly consenting in a matter of this nature, unlesse his evidence be very good. He had need be well advised before he charge them to maintein a worship not allowed, an idole-prayer for the spirituall worship of God, a strange form of prayer, which was never approved, whereat a Christian may not safely be present, against which he is bound to witnesse. Be it that the churches do erre herein; yet I hope they be not obstinate, and such as will not give consent to the truth when it is shewed and manifested: How cometh it then to passe that none of them hitherto have subscribed to their opinion and practice? Either their arguments are not sufficient to convince, and then their Separation is unjust; or they generally want eyes to see the light (for they will not say they want conscience to acknowledge what they cannot but see) and then in meeknesse they are to be born withall, if upon well tried grounds a man be assured, that they all, and not he himself, is in the error. The testimony of the church then is not infallible; because it may erre, and hath erred, and some members of it at this day do erre in the particular differences that be amongst them: but yet the constant testimony of the whole church in the times of light and reformation is of great weight; otherwise the Apostles would never alledge the practice and consent of churches, to confirm the faithfull, and stop the mouthes of the contentious.

Acts 15. 22,

28.

1. Cor. 11. 16.

& 14. 33.

Object. 5.

We must look to the primitive churches planted

ed by the apostles, who are patterns to them and us : But the apostolick churches for many yeares had no such Liturgie devised or imposed : And therefore it is no ordinance of Christ, because the churches may perfectly and entirely worship God without it with all the parts of holy and spirituall worship.

Copy of a Letter, ibid.

Robinson, Against Bern. pag. 474.

We freely confesse it to be no ordinance of Christ by speciall institution, nor part of his worship : It sufficeth, that it is allowable in the worship, and consonant to the generall rules given in scripture, but not of absolute necessitie. Whether any stinted forms of prayer were in use in the apostolick churches, is more then can be affirmed certainly or denied. That the apostles prescribed none as necessary, that is easily beleaved, because no mention of it : That none was in use, our Divines will neither peremptorily affirm nor deny. But if that be granted, it is no prejudice to a stinted Liturgy, nor to the churches apostolick, who are to be our patterns. For it is more then probable, that many assemblies had not the scriptures read in a known tongue at their first planting: it is more then can be shewed by precedent or example, that they were read in any Christian congregation. Some churches converted by the preaching of the Gospel had neither books nor letters. It may be others received the books of the Old Testament from the apostles at their first conversion : but suddenly they could not be translated into every language ; and till they were translated they could not be read in the congrega-

Ans.

At the first preaching and publishing of the Gospel certain barbarous nations received the faith of Christ, had neither books nor letters, *Iren. lib. 3. Advers. har. cap. 4. Jewel, Against Hard. art. 15. div. 4.*

tion

tion unto edifying. The books of the New Testament could not be delivered untill they were written: but they were not written all at once: and when they were all written, being sent to severall churches, it must be some time before they could be gathered together and translated. And if nothing be allowable in the church but what was found in the primitive churches planted by the apostles by record of scripture, I fear the reading of the scriptures in a known tongue must be cast out of the congregations. I go not about to equalize stinted Liturgies with set translations of the holy scriptures: but I would intreat such as oppose a stinted Liturgie by these reasons, to consider whether they do not put weapons into the adversaries hands to fight against the scriptures. Again, set forms of catechismes publick or private, composed by the minister or devised by others, used with liberty to adde or alter as occasion requireth, are no more commanded of God then set forms of prayer, nor no more in use in the apostolick churches: Christ our Saviour, the Prophets or Apostles have no more appointed the one then the other: if all parts of holy and spirituall worship may be performed without a stinted Liturgie, they may be performed also without a stinted or set catechisme: and if a set form of prayer must be

Arias Montan. in Isa. 28. 20.

Quæ oratio ut clarius exponatur, observationem postulat consuetudinis Judæorum, qui breves artes five catechismos conscribere consuevere: quibus tota Legis summa in sexcenta & sex præcepta breviter divisa continebatur. Quorum libellorum ex-

empla adhuc exstant. Erat (ut videre etiam atque experiri licebit) in libellis istis verbum frequens Tsau, quod non raro apud Moysen invenitur. Hoc voluit Esa. populum illum in nudis & brevibus atque jejunis elementis & rudimentis hærentem, &c. The Prophets and the Apostles are not found to prescribe set words for the minister to teach, or the people to answer being examined, Ainsworth, pag. 238. See Calvin. Opusc. Præfat. Catechism.

disallowed

disallowed, a set form of catechisme, publick or private, composed by the minister or devised by others, must be condemned also: But the antiquity, excellency and necessity of catechizing is known to them who are exercised in the building and governing of the house of God: the use and profit of a set form therein is both manifest by reason, and confirmed by experience, at home and abroad, in publick and private, to them who have laboured to lay the foundation of Christian religion, and train up the people committed to their charge in sound wisdom and understanding. And in these things we swerve not from our pattern, because we teach and professe the same doctrine, and worship God with the same worship and substantiall means of worship that the primitive churches and Christians did.

There is the same reason of reading the Apocrypha, books of Maccabees and those that follow them in the congregation, and of reading a stinted form of Liturgie: and the same reasons that silence the Apocrypha will silence stinted prayers as well and as much.

When we prove the lawfulnessse of a stinted form of prayer by the stinted forms of psalmes and blessing mentioned in scripture, it is thought answer sufficient to say, There is great difference betwixt blessings or psalmes and prayer: and yet here it is enough to match things unlike together, and to say of them without all proof, There is the same reason of both. But if it have any finews, it will silence the singing of psalmes, sermons, professions

Object. 6.

*See Robinson,
pag. 476.*

Ansiv.

essions of faith, and conceived prayer no lesse then stinted, especially the use of notes to help memory, and forms of catechisme by whomsoever and howsoever used: For there is the same reason of reading and uttering by heart in the congregation. And if nothing but the canonicall scriptures must be read in the congregation, nothing must be uttered by heart or strength of memory but the scriptures alone: But sermons, professions of faith, conceived prayer, are not canonicall scripture. The reason is one; and whatsoever can be answered truly in the one, will put the other to flight. If it be said, That it is the prerogative of the scripture to be the rule of faith and manners, and therefore nothing is to be read in the congregation as the ground undoubted and immediate of faith and manners but the scripture alone; this openeth way for stinted prayer as well as for sermons or conceived prayer. The substantiall means of worship both publick and private are determined of God. It is unlawfull to set up an image for worship either publick or private. The scripture must be acknowledged the sole rule of faith and manners both in publick and private. It is unlawfull to devise sacramentall signes in private as well as in the congregation. And if it be unlawfull to reade any other book in the congregation, because the reading of the scripture is the onely approved *medium cultus*, by the same reason all forms of catechismes, and singing of psalmes, and reading or use of stinted praiers in the family are unlawfull. And if the one be an image in the congregation the others

others are so in the family. *When the Lord had devised and appointed a perfume* (saith the authour of the Letter) *all men are forbidden to make a composition like that perfume, Exod. 30. 35, 37.* So if it could be proved that Christ had made a form for the churches and believers alwayes when they pray, then the offering up of any other prayers, made by others or of our own devising, would seem to be as unlawfull as the offering of strange incense, Exod. 30. 9. Where it is implied, that seeing God hath determined no certain form, therefore forms devised by men are not necessary, but lawfull. In the same manner they may be answered from their own grounds; That seeing God hath sanctified and set apart the canonicall scriptures, given by immediate Divine inspiration, to be the sole and perfect rule of faith and manners, therefore the scripture alone must be read and acknowledged as the sole ground of heavenly instruction: But seeing he hath determined no certain form of prayer or sermons, professions of faith, or thanksgiving, therefore either none at all must be made, or forms devised by men are lawfull to be heard in the congregation; yet not as immediate and undoubted grounds of faith, (for that is proper to the scripture) but as instructions and exhortations builded upon, or petitions framed according to the scripture, as present occasion doth require. In sermons who doth

Copy of a Letter, pag. 18.

Mr Greenwood perceiving the weakness of this objection, frameth it thus: No Apocrypha must be brought into the publick assemblies; for there onely Gods word & lively voice of his own graces must be heard, Greenwood, pag. 10. But this limitation is groundlesse, propounded without warrant of scripture, and may be rejected as an humane devise. For the phrase of speech in sermons, prayers, professions of faith, and sing-

ing of psalmes is of man as well as in stinted prayers devised by others; and if the one may not be heard in the congregation, neither may the other be uttered or sung: And most certain it is, that neither the one nor the other is to be received as the undoubted rule of faith or manners.

not put a difference betwixt the text whereupon the discourse, instructions, exhortations, rebukes & comforts be grounded & deduced, & the exhortations, rebukes & comforts which are propounded in method & phrase of speech devised by men. The first is & ought to be canonically scripture; the other not so. But it would argue great ignorance, if not perverseness, if a man should cavill in this manner against the preaching of the word, That the scriptures alone are to be read in the congregation, therefore the minister of the Gospel must simply read the scripture, but never give the meaning, nor make application. In the Primitive church sundry councils have forbidden the reading of any books as parts of Divine worship but canonically scripture onely of the Old and New Testament: but no council ever condemned the use of a stinted Liturgie. Those churches which forbade the reading of any books which be without the canon, did first receive a stinted form of prayer: and the councils themselves take order touching the reading of the scripture, and the singing of psalmes, and other things which pertain to a stinted Liturgie. So that those Fathers & churches had not learned, that the same reasons which silence the Apocrypha in the congregation will silence all stinted forms of Liturgie as well and as much.

Object. 7. As it were a ridiculous thing for a child, when he would ask of his father bread, &c. to read it to him out of a paper: so it is for the children of God, especially for the ministers of the Gospel in their publick ministrations, to read unto God their requests

*Concil. Laodic.
can. 59. Con-
cil. Carthag.
3. can. 47.*

*Concil. Hippon.
can. 38.*

*See Jewel,
Def. Apol. part.
5. cap. 3. div.
10.*

*Concil. Laodi-
cen. can. 15,
16, 59. Con-
cil. Carthag. 3.
can. 23.*

*Jewel, art. 3.
div. 2.*

Object. 7.

*Robinson,
Against Berr.
pag. 475.*

requests for their own and the churches wants out of a service-book, wherein they are stinted to words and syllables.

It is a common saying, Similitudes agree not in all things; and a rule as generall, That to argue from a bare similitude is the loosest kind of reasoning: which may be applied to cover or countenance any error or abuse whatsoever. Therefore this objection might well have been passed over (as it is omitted by the most that have written of this subject, that I have seen) but that colours and shadows do often take more with some then that which is substantiall. If a man would set himself to plead for superstitious abuses and idolatrous practices, errors and unwritten traditions, is it not an easie matter by some similitude to cast a fair glosse upon them? And it is a strange thing, that such as with so much earnestnesse set themselves against all humane inventions and devises in Gods worship, should by their form of reasoning open the flood-gates wide for all superstitious, idolatrous, antichristian devises and impieties, as this reason doth. I need not instance: every man that knoweth what is principally alledged in defense of any popish, vain, unprofitable, superstitious or idolatrous practice or custome, or will take pains to look, must needs see this to be so. But to look upon the objection it self; If a child being to ask many particulars of his father for himself and others should write them in a paper for the help of memory or some other reason, and having committed them to memory as they are registred in his paper, should in that form of words digested

Ans.

and written down present his requests before his father without addition or alteration ; what morall evil or incivility should be committed in this case? why should this be esteemed a thing ridiculous? And if similitudes do please so well, may we not say with more reason and upon better ground, That as a learned oratour being to make an oration in an honourable presence about divers matters of weight and importance, will not onely study and digest but penne his speech, and deliver it word for word as it is contrived and penned ; so the minister of the Lord of hosts in his publick ministration is not onely to consider what requests he is to make to God in his own and the peoples behalf, but to digest them into fit method, and to penne or write them down, and to utter them in the congregation as he hath contrived them. Let the indifferent judge whether of these two be the most reasonable.

Object. 8.
Robins. ibid.

Book-prayer is generally laid aside in the families of best Christians : And in all reformed churches generally the use of a book by every able and godly minister is left off ; and at home it is accounted and complained of as a burden by the better sort of them that use it.

Ansiv.

Many things are disused, and that by the best Christians, which are not unlawfull. Where there be many wayes to the wood, ordinarily men may make choice of one or two, not disallowing the other. It is lawfull for Christians when they pray in their families, dayly to reade the ten commandments, the profession of faith, &c. which is generally laid aside without sinne. Many things
also

also may be decent in the congregation which are not so expedient and requisite in the family. And in one congregation a thing may be lawfull and of use which is disused in another without sin, where yet it would not be unprofitable. The deacons in Chrysostomes and Basils time used to call upon the people with these words, *Oremus, Attendamus*, Let us pray, Let us give care. The deacon at the holy mysteries stood up and thus spake unto the people, *Oremus pariter omnes*. The manner was, that before every lesson or chapter the minister should say unto the people, *Let us attend*. If this custome be disused either in the congregation or Christian families at this day, it doth not argue the thing it self to be indecent or unprofitable. And if by *Book-prayers* all stinted forms, whether read or repeated by help of memory, be understood, they are not so generally rejected in the families of the best Christians nor in the ministry of the most able and godly ministers as the objection importeth. Let us heare the testimony of a godly, learned, and well experienced minister now at rest with the Lord: *When as, saith he, the question is made by many of the lawfulnessse or at least of the expediency of praying by the help of a book, or of using a prescript and set form of prayer, it is to be considered, that there be divers degrees and measures of gifts, both*

Chrysost. hom. 3. in 2. ad Thess. Quando enim qui lecturus est, surgens dicit, Hæc dicit Dominus; & diaconus stans omnibus indicto silentio compescit.

Chrys. hom. 3. in Epist. ad Ephes. Jeron. el. Des. art. 3. divis. 16.

Chrys. in Act. hom. 19. Scit minister, & communis minister, & altæ voce clamat. Post illam vocem incipit lector prophetiam Esaiæ. Isidor. Hispan. l. 1. De eccles. offic. c. 10. & l. 2. c. 8.

St. Egerton Practic. of Christ. Certain advertisements touching prayer, &c. Synops. purior. Theolog. disp. 36. thes. 33. Quæri hic solet, utrum conceptis precationum formulis publicè aut privatim uti liceat. Nos, si modò cum debita animi attentione pronuncientur, non tantùm licitas sed & valde utiles esse contendimus, quia novas & ad præparandum concipere cuius Christiano datum non est, & attentio auditorum in magnis conventibus per usitatas formulas non parùm juvatur, &c. Imò Christus ipse in cruce pendens, deprecationis formâ, à Davide tanquam typo antea observatâ, usus est, Matth. 27. 46.

naturall

naturall (as wit, memory, utterance) as also of grace (as knowledge, faith, zeal) given to divers men; besides that some have been more trained and exercised in this holy duty then others : Now they that are better gifted, either by nature or else by grace and custome, may use the more liberty. Which difference I have observed not onely in divers private Christians, but also in some most reverend, faithfull and worthy ministers; some using both in their publick ministry and in their private families a stinted prayer and set form of words, with little alteration at all, except some extraordinary occasion have happened : and yet both sorts so furnished with pietie and learning as I could hardly preferre one before the other. And a little after, For the publick congregation, for the most part it is expedient to keep a constant form both of matter and also of words; and yet without servile tying of our selves to words and syllables. If the judgement of reformed churches abroad, or of the godly, faithfull, learned and reverend at home, be of any weight, they are so farre from complaining of a stinted form as burdensome, that in many cases they judge it expedient. A set form of prayer and administration of the sacraments, not onely devised by the minister himself, but agreed upon by the churches, is approved by generall consent. Is there any reformed church established which hath not their book of common prayer? The ministers at home

Baine, in

2. Tim. c. 1.

vers. 13.

It is good to have a set form of doctrine.

God gave this summe to Adam, The seed

of the woman, &c. The ten commandments, the propheticall sermons abridged, Heb. 6. 1. They had the principles of the doctrine of Christ. And when religion was restored, new forms, institutions, catechismes, were appointed in the church.

to whom the use of common prayer hath been thought most burdensome, have from time to time professed their liking and approbation of a stinted Liturgy; That they like well enough of that council that forbad vulgar psalmes in the service of God, and those forms of service which are not *antea probata in concilio, vel cum prudentioribus collata*, lest haply some things against faith, either through ignorance or want of consideration, should be composed; That they never sought a razing of the communion-book, but a filing of it after the pattern of that care which former examples set them, wherein they thought some things retained which might well have been spared: They have evermore condemned voluntary Separation from the congregations and assemblies, or negligent frequenting of those public prayers: They have ordinarily and constantly used the communion-book in their public administrations; and still maintained unity, peace and love with them who in some particulars have been of another judgement. All this is so notoriously known that it is wast labour to produce testimonies herein. As for the reading of a stinted form, it may be it is not constant in all reformed churches, exacted of every minister at all times; but, that it is not used at all, is more then I can credit: and if they exact not the use of the same form continually, the thing it self they greatly approve. If any man desire an instance

*Concil. Laodic.
can. 59.
Concil. Carthagin 3. can.
23.
Concil. Milc-
vitan. can. 12.
African. can.
70.*

*See Rogers 7.
Treatis. 3.
treat. chap. 4.*

See Zepper, De
polit. ecclaf.
lib. 2. cap. 4.
Calvin. Opusc.
Precum eccle-
fiat. formule.
Beza in Can-
tic. Hom. 1.

instance of their doings, let him compare the prayer which Beza constantly used before and after sermon with the Geneva-book of common prayer. And if they impose not their forms upon all congregations to be used of necessitie, but leave it free to use them or some other in substance one and the same; yet this is certain, they disallow their opinion who condemn all stinted forms and Liturgies as vain, superfluous, humane inventions, a strange worship, and breach of the second commandment.

CHAP. VIII.

The people may lawfully be present at those prayers which are put up unto God in a stinted form of words, and partake in divine ordinances administred in a stinted Liturgie.

Copy of a Letter,
pag. 4.

THe authour of the Letter formerly cited telleth us, That against our prayer-book divers men have pleaded after a different manner. First, some arguments, saith he, are proper to the Separatists, quæ tales; viz. 1. That it is offered up in a false church. 2. With a false ministry. 3. In the behalf of the subjects of the kingdome of Antichrist. These are properly theirs, being the grounds whereupon they make a totall Separation from all the churches in this land, as no churches of Christ. These I approve not: yet note them, that you may see upon how different grounds the same position is maintained by severall persons, and

and that you may be delivered from the prejudice which hindreth many from receiving those truths, because they fear the reproch of Brownisme. Secondly, there are other grounds which are common to all that plead for the puritie of Christs ordinance; and which do not necessarily inferre such Separation, but onely serve to shew the unlawfulnessse of that practice, and of communicating therein. Thus farre the Letter. Wherein, to let passe other things, we may take notice of a two-fold Separation from the worship of God amongst us acknowledged: the one totall, as from a false church, false ministry, and subjects of the kingdome of Antichrist; the other partiall, from the stinted Liturgie, and ordinances of worship dispensed in a stinted form. And this latter onely is approved by this authour, but not the former, of which we make no question. But whereas he saith, his grounds upon which he buildeth his last Separation are common to all that plead for the puritie of Christs ordinances, therein he is much mistaken. For his grounds are one and the very same with the Brownists, whereby they condemne all stinted Liturgies, acknowledged by no reformed church in the world, nor by particular pastors in any church but themselves. And if they take not themselves to be the onely pleaders for the purity of Christs ordinances, they cannot shew that these reasons have been approved, or positions allowed, by any pleaders for reformation in any time or age of the church. The reasons brought to confirm the unlawfulnessse of com-

municating in the ordinances of worship amongst us administred in a stinted Liturgie, are of two sorts : Some condemne all stinted forms and Liturgies devised by men : others concern our book of common prayer more particularly, as it is charged with sundry faults and corruptions. The first, as they concern the ministers who make use of a stinted Liturgy, have been examined already : Now I come to examine them both as they concern the people; and therefore lay down this proposition, That in case it should be unlawfull in some respects for the minister of the Gospel or governour of the family to reade or pronounce without book a prescript form of prayer devised by another, yet no reason can be shewed why it should be unwarrantable for the people, child, servant, wife to be present at such prayers in the congregation or family. I speak not of prayer for the matter erroneous and naught, but stinted and read. For if the matter be faultie, the prayer is not good because conceived : and if good and pure, it is not made evil and hurtfull to the hearers because it is read.

Argum.

First, what letteth why the hearers heart may not follow a prescript form of words holy and good, either in confession of sinnes, request, or thanksgiving ? What letteth, I say, that the hearers hearts may not profitably go with the same, both to humble, quicken and comfort ? The people, child, servant are commanded to examine and prepare themselves before they draw nigh into the presence of the Lord : But where are they

com-

commanded to look whether the minister or governour do pray by the Spirit immediately, or out of his memory; in a set form of words conceived beforehand, or suggested without premeditation; in the same form of words ordinarily with little or no variation, unlesse it be upon speciall occasion, or in different order, method and phrased every day; whether he read his prayer or pronounce it onely? And if God have laid no charge upon their conscience to inquire into these and such like particulars before they joyn in prayer, voluntarily to withdraw our selves from the ordinances of worship in these respects, what is it but to adde unto his word? When things agreeable to the will of God are begged of God every day in the same form of words, as the things begged are the same, it is not either the stinted form of words, or the presenting of requests by reading them upon a book, that can make the prayer unprofitable, much lesse abomination in respect of him that joyneth. If the minister in that case pray coldly or without affection, his sinne cannot hinder the blessing of God from the people. If the governour be weak in naturall gifts, as memory or utterance; or spirituall, as knowledge, &c, the lawfull use of a stinted form in that case is not denyed by some as a needfull help to supply defect. And if the governour, to help his weaknesse, make use of a stinted form, whether may the servant, child, or wife, who conceit they need no such furtherance, joyn with him in prayer or no? If not, I desire to know by what authoritie they may withdraw them-

selves: If they may joyn, then the heart prepared may follow a prescript form of words devised by others.

Object. 1.
Johnson, ubi
suprà, pag. 35.

To reade our prayers out of a book, is to draw nigh unto God with the lips when the heart is removed farre from him; because it is not to draw and poure forth our prayers out of the heart by the holy Ghost.

Answ.

A man may both reade his prayers out of a book and poure them forth out of his heart, as hath been formerly proved, and is confessed by them that allow a prescript form in case of need: For they will not say, It is lawfull to draw nigh unto God with the lips when the heart must needs be removed from him. But if this be granted for the present (which is most false) I demand whether it be a drawing nigh with the lips onely in respect of him alone that readeth the stinted form, or of all present? Not of all present: For how can it be said that their hearts are removed from God who in sincerity and truth of heart desire the obtaining of what is prayed for, agreeable to the will of God? Hypocrisie hath lost its ancient nature, if it be hypocrisie to draw nigh to the throne of grace in the name of Christ with understanding, confidence and uprightnesse. If it be a lip-labour in respect of him that readeth it onely, it can be no sufficient ground of Separation in others. For in conceived prayer the minister or governour may pray with the lips and voice when the heart is absent: and they that joyn may pray in truth when the prayer is uttered or pronounced in a prescribed form.

form. An hypocrite cannot call upon God in uprightness at any time; and yet they will not say it is unlawfull to joyn in prayer with such a man. Put case a particular man did know his minister to be an hypocrite by more certain evidence then possibly he can know read prayer to be lip-labour; yet he is bound in conscience not to separate from the publick prayers or ordinances of grace administred by such a man. For Christ hath commanded us to come unto him, hath promised to be present with them that assemble together in his name, to heare them that in truth call upon his name: and though an hypocrite shall not be heard for himself, he may be heard for others. A minister he is, not for his own good, but his administration is effectuell to the heirs of salvation: Formally, as some speak, he hath not pardon of sinne for the comfort of his own soul; but ministerially, instrumentally, he hath it for the benefit of others: that is, hee possesseth not the promise of pardon for his own comfort, but he bringeth it for the good of others. A Christian may not absent himself from the publick prayers of the congregation and ordinances of grace unlesse Christ hath given him leave or commandment so to do: but when he may call upon God purely and sincerely, he hath not given a Christian leave to separate or withdraw himself because he conceiteth the minister to be an hypocrite. But of this more hereafter. Let us then imagine (if fantasie can be so strong) that the use of a stinted prayer is but lip-labour in the minister or governour; what else

else can follow, but that the service is lawfull, the lip-labour being corrected: which is done, not by Separation, but by conjoyning the service and affection of the heart and inward man with the exercise of the outward.

Object. 2.

*Johnson, ubi
supra.*

*Robinson, A-
gainst Bern.*

pag. 425, 473.

Greenwood,

*Answ. to Gif-
ford, pag. 2.*

Answ.

Reading is not prayer: For in prayer we poure out desires and supplications from the heart; in reading we let into the heart the things that are read. A blind man may pray, but he cannot reade. He that readeth speaketh not to God but to the people.

To reade is not to pray: but in reading a man may pray agreeable to the ordinance, with right affection of soul: As to pronounce is not to pray; because a dumbe man may pray, who cannot speak: but when a man uttereth his prayer for the edification of others, he himself may and doth speak unto God. But if this be presupposed, that a man cannot both reade a prayer and pray himself, what hindreth that others cannot lift up their hearts unto God, and joyn in requests according to the prescript form of words? Is not the matter fit because it is prescribed? cannot the heart desire or lift up it self because the requests are read? doth the very act of reading pollute the whole action? If all things essentially required in prayer may be observed of them that joyn in prayer with such as reade them, then the simple act of reading is not sufficient cause why Christians should withdraw themselves: But all things essentiall to prayer may be observed of them that joyn in prayer with such as reade: the matter may be fit, sound and holy,

ly; the affections, good; and so the work, acceptable unto the Lord.

The monuments of antiquity shew that the Jews used a stinted form of Liturgie and prayer in their synagogues, and at the celebration of the passeover, before the dayes of our Saviour Christ: But our Saviour Christ never taught the people to absent themselves from the prayers of the synagogues, or from the passeover: rather he commanded them to frequent the assemblies, and observe the passeover, wherein he himself did give example, ordinarily resorting to the synagogues upon the sabbaths, and observing the passeover at the time appointed.

It is not certain that the Jews had or used a stinted form of Liturgie or prayer in their synagogues, or the celebration of the passeover.

It is not certain by certainty of Divine faith; for it is not testified in the holy scripture: but by humane testimony it is so probable, that even such as deny all lawfull use of a stinted form do give their assent hereunto, as hath been shewed before.

The Jews did not prescribe and set apart their prayers for publick use, as our Liturgie is: neither were they tied to them as we are, but left to use or not use them as they saw most fit for edification.

Bring this answer to the light, and it yieldeth the cause as fully as can be desired. For if the Jews had or used a stinted Liturgie in their synagogues and celebration of the passeover, devi-

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2 Argum.

See Paulus
Fagius in
Chald. Para-
phr. Lev. 16.
Idem in Chald.
Paraphr.
Deut. 8. Fr.
Jun. Annot.
in Act. 13. 15.

Luke 4. 16.
31. & 13. 10.
Mark. 1. 21,
23.

Object. 1.

Ans. w.
See Gerhard.
Harm. in
Matth. 26.
cap. 1.

Object. 2.

Ans. w.

fed by others, when the faithfull did lawfully resort to the synagogues, and observe the passeover administred according to that form; then the faithfull may and ought to joyn in prayer or participation of Divine ordinances, though administred in a stinted Liturgie devised by others. It is to no purpose to alledge that that form was not set apart for publick use, nor they necessarily tied unto it, when the simple use of such a stinted form devised by others is condemned as unlawfull in respect of minister and people, the imposer and user. Plain dealing is a jewel. Moreover (to take away the ambiguitie of the word) a stinted form may be set apart for publick use two wayes: Either as sanctified to be the immediate and infallible rule of prayer, a substantiall or proper means of worship, holy by institution and necessary in conscience, in respect of Divine commandment: and in this no publick Liturgie is or ought to be set apart, because none is prescribed of God, none such can be devised or appointed of men: Or it may be set apart, where no one being determined by God, one is freely chosen and agreed upon for publick use, as consonant to the generall rules of

The word in
scripture signi-
fiesh 1. in a
large sense to
separate or set

apart to some use lawfull, but naturall or civill, 1. Tim. 4. 5. 1. Cor. 7. 14. Isa. 13. 3. 11. To prepare, appoint, proclaim. Exod. 19. 10. Sept. ἀγρίσας, Targ. prapara. Jer. 12. 3. & 31. 27. 2. Reg. 10. 20. Sept. ἀγρίσας. Joel. 1. 14. Jer. 6. 4. Sept. παρα-
τάξας, al. παρασκευάσας. John 10. 36. III. To set apart to an holy use: as God is
said to sanctifie persons, things and times by his institution and appointment: Jer. 1. 5.
Gal. 1. 15. Gen. 2. 3. and that, either to sanctifie but not to appropriate, or to sancti-
fie and appropriate both: Exod. 30. 31, 32, 33. & 30. 13, 26, 27. & 29. 44. 1. Reg. 8. 10.
& 9. 3. IV. Of prophane or polluted to make holy by infusion of holinesse or increase
thereof. 1. Cor. 6. 11. 1. Thess. 5. 23. Job. 17. 17. V. To professe and confesse
holily, or to glorifie, Lev. 10. 3. Isa. 8. 13. Isa. 5. 16. Sept. δοξάζοντας.

scripture

scripture for orders sake, to testifie consent in matters of faith, and for the help of them that may stand in need, not as the immediate and infallible rule of prayer, nor as a proper means of worship, nor as holy above others, nor necessary in point of conscience: and in this sense a Liturgy or stinted form may be set apart; and it cannot well be conceived how it should generally be used unlesse it be set apart, that is, unlesse one be chosen amongst many and agreed upon, to testifie consent. In a stinted form or Liturgie two things are to be considered: the matter it self; which, if holy and good, is of God, as in conceived prayer: and the externall method, order and phrase of speech; which is not determined by God, as, whether it shall be in these and these words, suddenly conceived or more solemnly composed, devised by others or invented by our selves. And seeing neither of these is determined, it is the devise of man to place opinion of worship, holinesse, or necessitie in either of them simply considered.

Our Saviour never joyned with them in their prayers, though he came often to their synagogues and meetings, but alwayes either to preach unto them, or reprove them for their humane inventions, taking the opportunitie of their meetings for this very end. *Object. 3.*

A stinted Liturgie is challenged to be an humane devise condemned by the second commandment, because it is not prescribed in the word: The like exception upon just grounds do I make to this answer, It is an humane devise, a corrupt addition, *Ans.*

Luke 1.41,43.

Luke 2.21,27.

Matth. 26.30.

Exod. 15.1,21.

Psal. 136.1,2.

Esdr. 3.11.

because it hath no warrant from the scripture. Why did our Saviour go up to the feast of the passeover according to the custome, when he was twelve yeares old, onely to preach unto them, and reprove their humane inventions, and not to keep the passeover? Did he ordinarily resort to the synagogues, and was he present at the lectures of the law and prophets, and did not joyn in prayer? He himself telleth us, it behooved him to fulfill all righteousness: and was not this one branch of that righteousness he was to fulfill? It is true, he resorted thither to preach the Gospel, and reprove the corrupt glosses of the scribes and Pharisees: but to preach the Gospel and joyn in prayer with the people of God in covenant, are things that may well stand together. Our Saviour reproveth the humane inventions of the scribes and Pharisees: but did he ever reprove them simply for their stinted Liturgie, or teach the faithfull not to joyn with the rest in their synagogues in any part of their stinted Liturgie? If he came to the synagogues merely to take the opportunity of their meetings, did he celebrate the last passeover with his disciples merely for that end likewise? And if any man will be so unadvised and rash (to say no more) it will not avail: For unto their custome of finishing the passeover with certain psalmes, there is not any thing more probable, then that the holy Evangelist doth evidently allude, saying, that after the cup delivered by our Saviour to his apostles, *they sung an hymne, and went forth to the mount of Olives*: And some adde, as the nature of

of some hymnes require, it may be there was a common foot of the song wherewith the disciples answered unto our Saviour Christ first singing.

If they did use such without good warrant, it will be no warrant to us : and if they had warrant from God for any forms they used about the passe-over, &c. if we have warrant from God we may do the like. And we know we must go by rule and not by unwarranted example in all things about Gods worship.

Object. 4.
We must do nothing in the worship of God without warrant of his word : But read-prayer hath no warrant in his

word, *Greenwood, Against Gifford, pag. 12.*

Warrant is twofold : One of precise institution, determination, and commandment : and thus all substantiall parts and proper means of worship must be warranted. But this warrant is not necessary to a stinted Liturgie, unlesse it be determined of God in speciall. And if that be true which some confidently affirm, that reading cannot be prayer ; or, that in reading a man cannot speak unto God ; or, that read-prayer is an idole-prayer : either it cannot be that by speciall institution a stinted prayer should be prescribed to be read, or speciall institution is not sufficient to make it warrantable. This I note here once again, to perswade men more considerately to view over their positions, and shew to how little purpose they oftentimes answer, that this or that form is not the

Ans.

Bellarmin. De Bapt. cap. 24.
objecteth that the reformed churches adde the Lords prayer and the Creed, &c. to baptisme. Neque his repugnat (saith he)

quod oratio Dominica sit in scripturis, & symbolum quoad sensum. Nam in scriptura non habetur ut recitetur in baptismo. *Our Divines answer, we have for addition of the Creed and the Lords prayer the generall warrant out of the word, which willett decency in the administration of the sacraments ; and these things suite with the nature of the sacrament. See Cham. tom. 4. De Bapt. l. 5. cap. 15.*

invention of man. Another warrant there is according to the generall rules of scripture, where nothing is particularly determined: and thus a stinted Liturgie is warranted both to the Jews and Christians; which is sufficient. Also the example of our Saviour Christ resorting ordinarily to the synagogues, and never speaking one word either to his disciples or other faithfull to beware of joyn- ing with the rest in any part of their stinted Litur- gies, is to us warrant abundantly sufficient not to withdraw our selves from prayer or other ordi- nances of God because administred in a stinted Liturgie.

3. *Argum.*
Copy of a Let-
ter, pag. 15.

1 Cor. 14. 16.

The spirit of the people should joyn with the ministers spirit in prayer, according to the ordi- nance of Christ, who ordereth no more to their parts in that case then to joyn with him, and to testifie it by saying, *Amen*. And if the prayer be sound, fit and holy, what hindreth why the people may not testifie their consent by saying, *Amen*. If the governours neglect to stirre up the graces and gifts of the Spirit in themselves, and so deprive the people of the benefit of their gifts, must not the people make use of such gifts as they use, if not their own, then others?

Object. 1.

The worship it self is vain, fruitlesse and un- warrantable.

Answ.

No branch of Gods worship consisteth in this, That our prayers be presented to God in this or that method, order or phrase of speech, in a form of speech devised by others, or invented by our selves; suddenly conceived, or premeditated long before,

before ; varied every time we pray, or one and the same often reiterated as occasion requireth. And if the worship it self be vain and unwarrantable, it must be either because the form of prayer is devised by himself, and uttered in a stinted form ; or devised by others and not by himself. If the former ; then no prayer is Gods ordinance which is not uttered without premeditation settled and digested, or at least which is not immediately suggested by the Spirit in respect of words and phrase of speech : If the latter ; then devised worship is not forbidden in the second commandment, but worship devised by another : For that prayer which should be pure worship if devised by a mans self, is unlawfull worship when devised by another : And so devised worship or prayer is not condemned, but worship or prayer devised by another man. And if this be not the devise of man, I know not what is. Can this alter the nature of the worship in the hearer, or him that joyneth, that the words in prayer are invented by another, studied by the governour, or more suddenly conceived ? In the judgement of some Divines the three first commandments are thus distinguished each from other : That the first commandment containeth all those our duties towards God which are naturall ; The second, all those duties in Gods speciall worship which are instituted : and either of these is both inward and outward. The third commandment requireth the well using of both these, and of all other things which come of God. If this distinction be allowed, a stinted form

*See Henr. Jacob, Exposit.
of the second
command-
ment, 7. rule.*

*Henr. Jacob,
ibid.*

form as such doth not at all belong to the second commandment: For instituted worship, and not the order or manner of performance, is the matter of the second commandment.

Object. 2.

Stinted prayer is unlawfull, because a man in devising it doth not exercise his own gifts.

Ans.

Though he exercise not his gifts in devising it, in reading or uttering it as a prayer he may set his understanding, judgement, faith, hope, love, humility, fervency and other graces of Gods Spirit on work. And if the minister do not, may not the people exercise their gifts in hearing? and so though it be unlawfull to him, it is not so to them.

Object. 3.

*Copy of a Letter,
pag. 16.*

Stinted prayer voluntarily taken up upon a mans self is not so much unlawfull; but prayer imposed upon men, because in such case they subject themselves to mans ordinance in Gods worship.

Ans.

This is a strange description of mans ordinance in the worship of God, or of worshipping God after the ordinances of men. For thence it will follow, that the same devised worship voluntarily taken up hath some allowance, as the ordinance of God, and ceaseth onely to be of God when it is imposed. Whereas the ordinances of men in Gods worship condemned in scripture are not mere matters of order, forms of words and phrases, circumstances of time and place determined by men according to the generall rules; but matters of worship devised besides and against the word of God; and are unlawfull whether voluntarily taken up and devised of our selves, or imposed by others.

A prescribed set form is not agreeable to the word of God for circumstance; because the prescribing of it is to set apart or sanctifie it for such an use without Gods command, and so to idolize it above other prayers.

Object. 4.

Superstition is not onely laid to their charge who offer to God for worship that which

he hath not commanded, but they also who assume in Gods worship the help of any thing as sacred or holy which himself hath not ordained. *Aquin. 2. 2. qu. 95. art. 2. Quæcunque observatio quasi necessaria commendatur, continud censetur ad cultum Dei pertinere, Calv. De vera Ecl. reform. pag. 367. Of the signification of the word Consecrate or dedicate, see Deut. 20. 5. Psal. 30. 1. Heb. 12. 27. Gaspar Sanctius. Alia dedicatio est non solum inter prophanos sed etiam inter Hebræos usitata, quæ nihil habet sacrum, sed tantum est auspiciatio aut initium operis ad quod destinatur locus aut res, cujus tunc primum libatur usus: Sic Nero Claudius dedicasse dicitur domum suam cum primum illam habitare cepit, Sueton. in Nerone.*

In what sense a stinted form of prayer is or may be set apart, hath been shewed before: But this description of *setting apart* or *prescribing* is a mere devise, barely affirmed without any shew of reason. What is here objected against a prescribed form, may be affirmed of a prescribed place, time and order for the celebration of Divine ordinances, which are of the same nature with it, and no more determined by the word of God. And suppose the minister or governour maintein some erroneous conceit touching the prescribed form of prayer, are the people, children or servants hereby authorized to withdraw themselves from such prayers? or the prayers themselves made unacceptable to such as know how to use them aright? One man is of opinion, that a prescribed form is better then another; another, that a prescribed form is unlawfull: one, that it is best ordinarily to use a stinted form; another, that he is to pray

Answ.

always

alwayes according to the present occasion in a different order and phrase of speech : In these cases if the least errour do stain the prayers to others that they may not lawfully joyn together, with whom shall the faithfull joyn at all ? Is not this to fill the conscience with scruples and the church with rents ? Errours and abuses personall, they rest in the persons so erring, and stain not others.

It is harsh to affirm, that such hath been the estate of the church ever since the death of the apostles almost, if not before, that a Christian could not without sinne joyn with any publick assembly in prayer or participation of the sacraments, that he must either separate from the prayers of the assembly and depart from the sacraments, or derogate from the authoritie of God, and worship him after the ordinances of men. For if such was the state of the Christian church from that time, what is become of those great and pretious promises made to the church in the times of the Messias ? Did the church begin to draw and give up her breath both in one day ? Many things were amisse in the church, many corruptions did begin to bud in the apostles times, and after their departure did put forth with greater vigour : and the saints of God, I doubt not, offended many wayes through ignorance and infirmity, which God in mercy was pleased to pardon unto them : But that the state and condition of the church was such that a Christian could not hold communion in prayer and the sacraments with the churches

He that but considereth what monstrous errors and corruptions sprang up in the churches of the new Testament whiles the apostles lived which planted them, will not think it strange though all almost were overgrown with such briars and thorns in a few ages following, *Robinson, Against Bern.* pag. 32.

churches of God, is contrary to the many promises in scripture made to the churches of the New Testament. It is true, the scripture doth forewarn us of an apostasie from the faith, and the mystery of iniquity began to work in the apostles dayes, and after their death things declined more and more: But that within an age or two after the apostles departure out of this life things were so corrupted that the godly might not hold communion with the church in prayer and participation of the sacraments, is more then an advised Christian will dare to affirm or think. But if a stinted form of prayer be unlawfull both to minister and people, to him that administers according to it and them that joyn, a Christian might not safely joyn in any church-assembly or congregation in prayer or participation of the sacraments, within few ages after the death of the apostles, if at all.

Unlawfull commands in matters of religion especially, cannot be obeyed without sinne; Hos. 5. 11. and it is a sinne to walk after them many wayes.

In matters of religion, if the commands of men be contrary to the commands of God for substance or matter of the thing commanded, we must obey God rather then men: But if the command of man be for substance of matter agreeable to the rules of scripture, pressed onely with too great strictnesse or severitie, it is not evermore against God, nor our superiours, nor the present age and posterity, nor ourselves, to yield obedience. If it be an holy form of baptisme, voluntarily

*Synops. purior.
Theolog. disp.
36. Thes. 33.
speaking of the
Lords prayer
used as a
form, saith, Si-
cuti quoque
tota vetusta
ecclesia id
semper extra
controversiam
habuit.*

*Object. II.
Copie of a Let-
ter, pag. 26,
27.*

Ans.

rily to baptize into the name of the Father, Sonne and holy Ghost, it doth not become an unhallowed ordinance, if the church shall take order that the minister shall baptize in this and none other form, in these and none other words. When God calleth a man forth to bear witness to the truth, he must not draw back but give testimony thereunto: But when Christ calleth us to worship him according to his will, we must not absent our selves for the sinne of others, under pretense of bearing witness to that we are not called unto. We must not violate the ordinances of the Lord, to partake in his ordinances: But if the matter of prayer be just, holy and good, a Christian shall violate no ordinance of Christ by his presence, but by his absence.

Object. 2.
Copy of a Letter
xxx, pag. 23.

It is not enough to prove our vocall prayers to be good because the words be good and expresse good petitions; but it is further required, that it proceed from ability which the Spirit of God bestoweth on him who uttereth the words, to fit his requests to the present occasion: John 4. 24. 1. Cor. 14. 15, 16. 1. Pet. 4. 7.

Answer.

Is it their meaning, that he that prayeth acceptably hath ability to fit his words according to the present occasion, or onely that he discerneth in some measure the words of prayer to fit the time and occasion of the people with whom he prayeth? If in the first sense, the passages of the scripture cited will not bear them out. If in the latter, it is nothing against the use of stilted prayer. Besides, when we speak of joyning with others,

others, is it necessary to the acceptance of prayer, that he which is the mouth of the rest to God should be able by the guidance of the Spirit to utter requests fitting the present occasion, and in fitting words? Suppose he be destitute of the Spirit, or of that measure of the Spirit, may not the good and holy requests which he putteth up by the direction and help of others be accepted in behalf of them that pray in the Spirit and poure out their prayers before God in holy affiance? To joyn with the people of God in prayer and participation of the sacraments is not a matter arbitrary which may be done or left at pleasure, but necessary when God calleth and giveth opportunitie. And if God hath promised to heare such prayers, and by his blessing some good may be gotten by them, a Christian must be well advised how he withdraweth himself, least whiles he pleaseth himself too much in some scrupulous conceits he prejudice his soul. Prayer is Gods ordinance, whereunto all Christians are bound to apply themselves: a stinted Liturgie is allowed of God, provided it be sound, holy and pure both for words and matter: And if any sinne be committed in the reading or use thereof, a Christian may perform whatsoever office the Lord requireth at his hand, as a private or publick person, without Separation.

The reading of service and the tedious length thereof doth even tire attention to more quickening ordinances. *Object. 3.*

A stinted Liturgie is so to be moderated that *Answer.*

each ordinance of God may have its fit season, and the length give place to edification. For what ordinances God hath conjoynd, they must not be rent asunder; nor one so advanced, as others be neglected. Without controversie their profanenesse is to be condemned, who out of a loathing of the holy things of God distaste the length of a Liturgie, and cry out of tirednesse, when indeed all holy ordinances are distastfull. Let us therefore consider a little what time the churches of God have taken and allowed for their publick service, and what exercises have been there performed, that we may truly judge, whether the length of a Liturgie is justly to be taxed, or the blame of tirednesse to be laid upon our security and carelesnesse. Upon extraordinary occasion on the day of a solemn fast the Levites read in the book of the law one fourth part of the day, and another fourth part of the day they confessed and worshipped. Their ordinary assemblies for publick worship continued for the space of three houres, *sc.* from the third houre untill mid-day, and from the ninth houre untill the evening. It was not ordinary to begin their assembly in the morning, but not to break up untill mid-day was ordinary. Herein, with prayer and exhortation, they had their lectures or sections of the law and prophets so large, that to reade them distinctly (as without question they were) would take up a good space of time. And if that very service of God in the Jewish synagogues, which our Saviour did approve with the presence of his owne person

Acts 6. 4.
Acts 12. 42. &
1. 14. & 20.
 36.

Neb. 9. 3.
See Jun. An-
not.

Acts 3. 1.
Neb. 8. 3.
Joseph. lib. De
zeta sua, Hora
sexta, quæ sab-
batis nostros
ad prandium
vocare solet,
supervenit.
Luke 4. 18.
Acts 13. 15.
& 15. 21.
Buxdorf. Ab-
breviat. Rab-
lin.

person and preaching, had so large portions of the law and the prophets together with many prayers used day by day, we must not alledge tirednesse, when it is but sloth. In the primitive church it may be no certain time is noted how long the assemblies continued: we must guesse at the length by that which was done in their solemn assemblies. When they met together for the worship and service of God, the Fathers prayed before and after the sermon, wishing to their hearers eternall blessings, and entreating of God the pardon of sins, &c. The scriptures of the prophets and apostles were read, *quamdiu hora patitur*: and after the reading of such portions of scripture followed the Sermon or word of exhortation, which failed not on the Lords day. Their Sermons (or as they are called Tractates, Disputations, Doctrines, Homilies, Conferences) were confined ordinarily to a certain space or time, that they might not alienate or weaken the minds of their hearers. Hence are those frequent excuses of longer speech, and dayly complaints of the straits of time, that they could not finish what was begun, or intreat thereof so fully as was expedient. It may probably be thought, the usuall

August. De doctr. Christi.

l. 4 cap. 15.

Præusquam exserat profertem linguam ad Deum, levet animam ficientem, &c.

Chrysost. Hom.

3. De incomprehens. Dei

natura. Sermoni oratio

debet antecire:

sic Apostoli dicunt, Non

est in oratione

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pore sanctissimi Patres, qui singulis Dominicis homilias ad populum declamitarant. Concil. Moguntiac. can. 25. Tert. Apol. ca. 3 Chrysost. in Gen. Hom. 27. Sermonem hesternum, quia prolixius se extenderit &c. & Hom 39. Ne multitudinem dictionum &c. Origen. in Gen. Hom. 2. quæ nunc adducere in medium vel pro brevitate temporis vel pro auditorum labore non possumus. Et Hom. 21. in Num. Priori quidem lectione tempore exclusi sumus. Cyrill. Hierosolym. Catech. 13. August. Hom. 23. lib. 40. Hom. & Sermon. De tempore, ser. 237. Chrysost. in Gen. Hom. 57. Cyrill. in Catech. 13. Et tempus horæ perbreve. Et Catech. 14. Propter horæ brevitem his criminis contenti. Chrysolog. Ser. 112. Horæ unius vix momentum obscura lucidare. August. Sermon. 11. De verb. Dom. in Matth. & Sermon. De tempore, 143. quantum hora sermonis permittit.

time

Clem. Constit. Apost. lib. 2. cap. 54. Post lectionem & cantum psalmorum, ac post doctrinam de scripturis. *Et lib. 8. cap. 5.* Post lectionem Legis & Prophetarum, & Actorum atq; Evangeliorum, salutatur ecclesiam ordinatus dicens, *Gratia Domini Jesu Christi, & charitas Dei Patris, &c.* Et post salutationem alloquantur populum sermone hortatorio. *Justin. Martyr, Apol. 2.* Deinde, ubi is qui legit destitit, is qui præest admonet & hortatur ut ea quæ lecta sunt bona imitemur. *Tert. Apologet. cap. 39.* Fidem sanctis vocibus pascimus, spem erigimus, fiduciam figimus, disciplinam præceptorum nihilominus inculcationibus densamus. *Origenes Hom. 15. in Jos.* Apostolos ordinasse testatur, ut libri Veteris Testamenti in ecclesiis legerentur. *See Socrat. l. 5. cap. 21: Amb. lib. De offic. 1. cap. 8.* Pulchrè dum legimus hodie Evangelium, Spiritus sanctus obtulit nobis lectionem, &c. Audivistis lectionem Evangelii. *See Ambr. epist. 75. & 33. & lib. De eleem. & jejun. cap. 20. Aug. Serm. 237. De Tempore.* Lectionum omnis auditor quod recentius lectum est magis meminit, &c. ut inde aliquid à tractatore dicatur expectat, &c. *Et Serm. 10. De verb. Apostol.* Has tres lectiones quantum pro tempore possumus pertractemus, dicentes pauca de singulis. *Chrysost. Serm. Carnis concupiscentias ne sectemur,* Dic mihi, quis hodierno die vel Propheta vel Apostolus prælectus est; aut quibus de rebus verba feci. *And sometimes some speciall or peculiar lecture was read, which might fit and agree to the matter of the sermon: August. Serm. 121. De diversis.* In memoria retinentes pollicitationem nostram, congruas etiam ex Evangelio & Apostolico fecimus recitari lectiones. *Et Serm. 23. De verb. Dom. secundum Matib.* Hesternò die, qui adfuitis promissionem nostram tenetis, &c. veruntamen secundum ea quæ continet ipsa lectio quam charitate vestri etiam volui recitare, &c. *Et Tract. 12. in Johan.* Quam lectionem vobis iterum legi fecimus, ut quæ tunc non dicta sunt in Christi nomine, adjuvantibus orationibus vestris, impleamus. *Chrysolog. Serm. 66.* Duas hodie à duobus Evangelistis editas ita recitari fecimus lectiones, ut sermoni nostro vestri intellectus occurreret. *Aug. Tract. 15. in Johan. Et Serm. 121. August. Tract. in epist. Johan. præfat.* Meminit sanctitas vestra, Evangelium secundum Johannem ex ordine lectionum nos solere tractare: Sed quia nunc interposita est sollemnitas sanctorum dierum quibus certas ex Evangelio lectiones oportet recitari, &c. ordo ille quem susceperamus, necessitate paululum est intermissus, non omissus. *Chrysost. in Concion. 4. in Lazar. Chrysolog. Serm. 122. Chrysost. Hom. in Gen. 33.*

time they took for the Sermon was the space of an houre or thereabouts. Before the sermon they read some portion of the Old and New Testament, as did the church of the Jews in their Synagogues out of the Law and the Prophets: And the lessons which they read did usually yield texts for the Preachers: so that the reading it self of the Law, the Psalmes, the Epistles & Gospels, reverently

used,

used, did not prejudice preaching, but further it rather. The manner was at the first to read and interpret whole books before them in order, unlesse it were on the feasts of the Nativity, Easter, Pentecost, &c. when speciall texts were wont to be chosen for the solemnity of those times: But those feasts being past they returned to their accustomed task. And beside the ordinary exposition of whole books in order, it is observed by some, that they read the whole Bible from the beginning to the end within the space of one yeare, specially in great congregations, which were held every day, which custome continued untill the yeare of Christ DCCCVI, or thereabouts.

In those frequent congregations which assembled every day the word was preached every day. And in the con-

Bucer. ad Ephes. Basil. ad Cas. Patric. ep. 289. Cypri. epist. 56. Zepper. De pol. eccl. lib. 2. cap. 8. August. Serm. 82. De Temp. Propter pauperes qui ad opera sua festinans, melius est hoc ut vobis in die crastina reseruemus. August. Tract. 46. in Johan. Eadem lectio recitabitur. Chrysost. Hom. 5.

ad popul. Antioch. Vestram heri charitatem consolata fuit. Et si enim heri & nudius tertius de hac vobis locutus sum materia, &c. Et Hom. 6. Facite igitur quod & heri admonui, & hodie dicam. Et Hom. 7, & 12. Et heri dixi, BENEDICTUS DEUS; & hodie hoc ipsum rursus dicam. August. Tract. 8. in Johan. Sunt fortè hodie multi qui propter solennitatem diei non propter audiendum sermonem venerunt: Crastino qui venerint, venient audituri, &c. Chrysost. advers. Judeos; Quemadmodum enim homines vino & potionibus dediti singulo quoque die simul ac surrexerunt obambulant, &c. sic & vos quotidie, simul ac surrexeritis, curiosè perquiritis, ubinam futura sit exhortatio, ubi salubris admonitio, ubi doctrina, ubi sermo, &c. Et Hom. 13. in Gen. Quotidie tamen inopem & tenuem hanc mensam vobis proponere studeo. Et Hom. 37. Hanc ob rem quotidie spiritualem hanc apponimus mensam, ut admonitione continuâ & multâ Divinarum Scripturarum exercitatione, &c. See Hom. 41, & 54. But where the Gospel was preached more frequent, there were some dayes in the week more specially appointed when the people were to heare: See Chrysost. ad cap. 3. Job. Hom. 24. Non enim singulis diebus, sed duobus tantum, & brevi eorum parte, ut vos labore levemus, hortamur ut orationi nostræ aures adhibeatis. Et Socrat. l. 5. cap. 21. Clemens Constit. Apostol. lib. 2. cap. 59. Die Dominico qui

dies est resurrectionis, studiosius templum Domini adite, ut Deum laudibus celebretis, &c. In quo etiam adhibeatur lectio prophetarum, evangelii prædicatio, &c. *Chrysostom. Hom. 5. in Matth.* Legem hanc nobis statuimus immobilem, nec nobis tantum sed conjugibus etiam liberisque nostris, ut unum hunc totius hebdomadis diem, quo ad audiendum concurritur, totum in eorum quæ dicuntur meditatione

ponamus. *And a little after,* Nimia enim omnino indevotio, & prorsus extrema est, ut quinque & sex dies quidem in rebus carnalibus consumentes, unum spiritualibus diem, imò exiguum diei partem, nolitis impendere. *August. Confess. lib. 6. cap. 3. speaking of Ambrose, saith,* & eum quidem in populo verbum veritatis rectè tractantem omni die Dominico audiebam. *Et Serm. 28. De verbis Apost.* Nunc cum die Dominico, debito reddendi sermonis recitaretur eadem lectio, Divinitus mihi inspiratum esse credidi, ut inde tractarem. *Synod. in Trull. cau. 10.* Oportet eos qui præfunt ecclesiis, in omnibus quidem diebus, sed præcipue Dominicis, omnem clerum & populum docere. *Upon which words Zonaras writeth thus,* Apostolici decreti auctoritatem secuti Patres hoc edito canone, cum aliis quoque tum Dominicis diebus, Episcopi oratione populum ad pia religionis studia informari ac institui jubent. Cum enim per eos dies vacationem à laboribus nacti homines in ecclesiam conveniant, ibique tempora Divinarum scripturarum auditione traducant, erit à populo longè fructuosior industria, quam in eo erudiendo ac instituendo iis præcipue diebus Episcopus adhibuerit. *And Balsamon;* Episcopi ecclesiarum Doctores constituuntur, & propterea dicit canon, eis omnino necesse esse, eum cui præfunt populum semper docere, & multò magis in diebus Dominicis, in quibus omnes ferè solent in ecclesiis interesse, ut qui à suis artificiis operibusque cessent. *Concil. Lemovicens. act. 2.* Omnes sacerdotes quibus parochia commissa est omnibus Dominicis & festis diebus admonere prædicando populum debeat, secundum illud, ARGUE, OBSECE, INCREPA; quia sacerdos, si sine prædicationis sonitu incedit, interminatione Divinà mortis reus est. Episcopus autem quos doctos viderit & ad hoc officium idoneos, non tantum jussu sed etiam rogatu ad tam sublime opus incitare debet. *See Concil. Arelatense can. 10. & Vasense 2. can. 4. & others cited before. Tert. De anima, cap. 9. reckoneth up these things inter Dominica solennia, sc. Scripturæ leguntur, aut psalmi canuntur, aut allocutiones proferuntur, aut petitiones delegantur.*

The time specially appointed or taken for the sermon was the morning, after the reading of the prophets and psalmes and evangelists. In the

*Aug. serm. 41.
De verb. Dom.
in Evang.*

Vacat vobis, matutinà cœpimus, hora prandii non urget.

after-

afternoon as assemblies so sermons were frequent ; and two or more sermons were made in one and the same congregation , sometimes by one, sometimes by divers ministers.

August. in psal.
88. *Reficiimini,*
& *refecti à*
cibis redite.
Ad reliqua
psalms de quo

in matutino loquuti sumus animum intendite. *Chrysostom. Hom. 10. in Gen.* Numquid tempus obfuit, dic quæso, sobrius auditor etiam pransus spirituali conventu dignus est. *Chrysostom. Hom. De Lazaro,* Novi fore multos, qui damnent ea quæ nunc dicuntur, veluti qui novam quandam & miram consuetudinem inveham concionandi : ac ego magis damnablem pravam consuetudinem, quæ nunc obtinuit. Etenim, quod post cibum ac mensam non ad somnum oporteat ire, nec ad cubile, sed oporteat cibo preces ac Divinarum scripturarum lectionem succedere, manifestius declaravit ipse Christus, &c. *Idem, Hom. 10. ad populum Antioch.* Arbitror enim multos jam pransos hodie adesse, & pulchram hanc nobis implere concionem. *Et Hom. 28.* Quando, quæso, vos dilecti melius fecistis, &c. an nunc, cum post mensam ad Divinas leges audiendas convenistis ? *Beatus Gauden. Tract. 4.* Bis in vigiliis allocuti sumus charitatem vestram. *Chrysost. Hom. in dictum Apost.* OPORTET HÆRESES ESSE ; Quod hodie diximus admodum simile & cognatum est ei quod hodie adhuc dicere decrevimus. Ut enim quæ dicta sunt hodie, ad reprimendam vitæ desidiam, &c. ita quæ nunc dicenda, &c.

After the sermon ended, followed the prayers of the congregation, as the testimonies before alledged plentifully confirm. *Clemen. Constit. lib. 2. cap. 57.* *After the exhortation of the Presbyter and the Bishop, all pray unto God.* *Justin. Apol. 2. ad Anton.* *Then we rise all and pray together, sc. after the exhortation ended.* *Origen. Hom. 3. in Isa.* *Idcirco surgentes oremus Deum.* & *Hom. 36. in Luc.* *Surgamus, precemurque Deum.* *Chrysost. Hom. 50. ad cap. 14. Matth.* *But now it is time to conclude our speech with prayer ; orate igitur universi nobiscum.* In all which we see the wisdom of the church so moderated the length of the Liturgie that each ordinance of God had its proper season ; that reading and prayer did not thrust out preaching,

The common people of Armenian Christians in the forenoon stay about foure houres in the church: and in the after-noon, from two of the clock untill six, *Job. Ave diorvire. Relat.*

preaching, nor preaching eat up prayer; that the weak were not tired and burdened, nor the sluggish fostered in their securitie. And if a Liturgie be onely burdensome for length, it is not altogether to be cast off: For the thing it self is thereby justified as good and allowable, that which burdeneth being taken away. And it is much better to wrestle against bodily tirednesse with spirituall fervour, then deprive themselves of the comfort and profit which is to be had in the ordinances of God.

of the religion and customes of the Armenian church.

Object. 4.

Copy of a Letter pag. 22, 23.

A treatise of the minist. of Engl. p. 12.

The book of common prayer

taken out of the Popes Portis, &c. H.

Ainsworth,

Considerations exam. pag. 4.

Another cause why we refuse

communion with you is,

for that you serve God, not

as himself commandeth,

&c. *Can. Necessitie of Se-*

parat p 78, 79

The worship of God by that stinted form whereof our question is, is the devise of Antichrist, it being never prescribed or used in the primitive churches planted by the apostles and recorded in scripture: But as the mystery wrought to a greater height in declining times of the church it was received by little and little, till at last it came to be completely framed, strictly enjoined, and every where used in the papacy, as serving to maintein superstition and a dumbe idole-reading ministry, and to nourish people in ignorance of the nature and right use of prayer. The Masse-book is in Latine, this Liturgie-book is in English; the Masse-book hath all the prayers this Liturgie hath, and some more: other differences I know not between them. Therefore king Edward the sixth in his letter to the Devonshire-men, to convince them that their Liturgie was our service, telleth them that it was no other but the old and the self-same words in English which were in Latine, save a few things taken out, which were so fond that it

was

was a shame to heare them in English. And king James in a speech of his in Scotland said, that their English Liturgie was an ill-said Masse. Pope Pius the fourth sending Vincentio Parpatia Abbat of S. Saviour to Qu. Elisabeth, offered to confirm the English Liturgie by his authoritie, if she would yield to him in some other things. Indeed this Liturgie pleased them so well, that for the first eleven years of Qu. Elizabeth Papists came to the English churches and service, as the Lord Cook sheweth. And when the Popes intelligencers had seen service solemnly sung and said in Canterbury and London with all their pomp and procession, they wondred that their master would be so unadvised, as to interdict a Prince or State whose service and ceremonies so symbolized with his own. The whole form then of the church-service (a few grosse things taken out) is borrowed from the Papists, culled and picked out of that popish dung-hill, the Portuis and vile Masse-book. But that form of prayer by which God is worshipped after the manner that idolaters worship their Gods, swerveth from a rule of prayer prescribed in scripture, Deut. 12. 3, 4. & 30. 31, 32. And this is made the first of the exceptions against the common-prayer-book, which were briefly added to in the Abbridgement, That it appointed a Liturgie which in the whole matter and form thereof is too like unto the Masse-book.

The main challenge in this objection (which I have set down more at large, because it is much insisted upon) against our communion-book is,

X 3

That

*Cambden, in
anno 1560.*

*Greenwood,
Against Gif
ford, pag. 28*

Id. pag. 80.

*Copy of a Let-
ter, pag. 23.*

Answ.

*Can. ubi supra.**1. Job. 1. 1, 2.*

That it was taken out of the masse-book. But in the manner of propounding there be divers great mistakes, to say no more. It is a great fault, that they put no difference betwixt the substance of worship and the externall form or order of celebration. The substance of worship in that stinted form of prayer, is, That we call upon God in the mediation of Jesus Christ, according to his will. Is this the devise of Antichrist becaule the form of words was taken out of the masse-book? Suppose a minister of the Gospel should borrow some expressions or phrases of speech from heathen authors, is his sermon forthwith the invention or devise of an heathen? It is as far wide that they say. *Not onely the form of it taken from the church of Antichrist, but surely the matter also.* For the matter of our Liturgie is the reading of the scriptures in a known tongue, the calling upon God in the mediation of Jesus Christ, and not upon angels or saints departed; for the living, and not for the dead: the right administration of the sacraments for substance, and singing of psalmes: are these the devises of Antichrist? Is the administration of the Lords supper in both kinds in remembrance of Christs death and passion, who by one oblation of himself once offered hath made a full perfect and sufficient oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world; is this taken from the church of Antichrist? These imputations are not so grosse, as their reasons weak upon which they are built. If our stinted Liturgy be the devise of Antichrist *because it is not prescribed by the apostles*

apostles or recorded in scripture, then every stinted Liturgie must fall under the same censure; for none other is prescribed in scripture, or recorded by the apostles: And so either every stinted Liturgie is part of that mystery of iniquitie which began to work in the apostles dayes, or our Liturgy is not Antichristian because it was not prescribed or used in the primitive churches planted by the apostles. If it was received by little and little till at last it came to be completely framed, then the first beginning of it was no more from Antichrist then was the beginning of other Liturgies. Antichrist sitteth in the Temple of God; and antichristianisme is a filthy and lothsome leprosie which by degrees did infect the pure worship of God: If therefore our Liturgie was sowed in after-times with that old leaven, it might be pure and free in its first originall. Is it for matter taken from the church of Antichrist *because it was culled and picked out of the popish dunghill, the popish and vile masse-book full of all abominations*? Who knoweth not that many pretious truths may be culled and picked out of the masse-book? Good gold may have some drosse; and amongst an heap of drosse it is possible to find some good gold. A true mans goods may be found in a thieves den or cave; and the goods of the church in the possession of Antichrist. Antichrist hath either by violence broken in upon, or by secret insinuation, before his cunning was spied, gotten the rich treasures of the church into his hand, which the right heirs may lawfully require and take back again, not

Greenw. Against Gifford, pag. 28. Read prayers were devised by Antichrist. An apologie or defense of such true christians, &c. 9. posit. pag. 67. The worshiping of God by read prayer is part of the worship of Antichrist, used and enjoined in the Papacie, &c.

Cann. ibid. A Treat. of Ministr. of Engl. pag. 34. H. Ainsworths Considerat. examined, p. 4.

not as borrowed from him, but as due to them. I scarce know how a man should more honour Antichrist or wrong the true church of God, then to grant that all the good things that Antichrist doth usurp do of right belong unto him and are borrowed from him: For they are the rich legacies which Christ hath bequeathed unto his church, to whom properly they pertain. The matter then of our stinted form may be from God, and proper to the church, though picked and culled out of the Masse-book. If therefore our stinted Liturgie be Antichristian, it is so either in respect of the matter or of the form. Not of the matter: for that which properly belonged to Antichrist, the foul and grosse errors, are purged out. Not of the form: for order and phrase of speech is not properly Antichristian; of which more hereafter. The Papists cannot sincerely approve our publick service but they must condemn and detest their own; their prayers in an unknown tongue, their praying to saints departed, much more to feigned saints, their receiving in one kind, their unbloudy sacrifice, their reall presence, their satisfaction for veniall finnes, and temporall punishment of mortall finnes, their blotting out of the second commandment, or at least confounding it with the first, with others the like. And if for the first eleven yeares of Qu. Elisabeth the Papists came to our churches and service, what can we think but that the hand of the Lord was with us at that time for good, when without division we sought him, and he was pleased so to honour

nour us, that our adversaries should at least feignedly submit themselves. The Lord grant all estates and conditions wisely to consider the true cause why they are fallen from our assemblies since that time and hardned in their perversenesse every day more and more. But to come to the thing it self objected, to wit, That our book of common prayer is wholly taken out of the Masse-book, we are here to note that *the Masse* in former times did signifie the worship of God, which consisted in publick prayers, thanksgivings, confession of faith, singing of psalmes, reading and interpretation of the holy scriptures, and receiving the sacrament of the Lords supper: and so the ancient Masse and Liturgie were the same. But now the *Romane Masse* is put for the unbloudy sacrifice of the body of Christ which the priest doth offer up for the quick and dead: And in this sense the word is to be taken when they say our service-book is taken out of the Masse-book. But it should rather be said, that the Masse was in time added to our communion-book, and by the purging out of the Masse it is restored to its former puritie. Popery is as a scab or leprosie that cleaveth to the church; and the Masse an abomination annexed to the Liturgie. Before ever the Masse was heard of in the world, or began to be hatched, there were stinted Liturgies in the church for substance much-

Missam audire dicitur qui liturgiam auscultat. Missas tenere est ecclesiasticos conventus agere. Hence missarum solennia celebrare, Grat. De Consecrat. dist. 1. can. 12. & 50. auditis missarum solennibus, &c. & 54. ex Concil. Tol 4. can. 12. Ambros. epist. 35. l. 5. Concil. Milevit. can. 12. See Gentillet. Exam. Concil. Trident. lib. 4. sess. 22. Bellarm. De Missa, lib. 1. c. 1 Tertullian, Cyprian, Origen, Lactantius, Hierome, Augustine never used the word MASSE, Jewel, Against Hard. art. 1. div. 5.

Mr Gifford saith there were Liturgies in the church before Antichrist was lifted up into his throne (which I will not deny.) I would have all men understand, that I do not go about to prove the church no church that hath a Liturgie, Greenwood, ubi *suprà*, p. 28.

Y

what

what the same with ours; and these at first more pure, after stained with more corruption, as the times grew worse and worse. The Eastern churches (as it should seem) had their stinted Liturgies first, and the Western borrowed many things from them: but as the times declined they brought in more and more drosse into the church untill the canon of the Masse was completely framed. The ancient Liturgies attributed to James, Basil, Chrysostom, &c. are counterfeit, as our Divines have largely proved, and the Papists cannot deny: But divers things contained in those Liturgies were in use in the primitive church without question. In the primitive times they had their appointed lessons out of the Law, and the Prophets, and the Psalmes, and the Evangelists; their stinted prayers and forms of celebration with some variety, but in substance all one in a manner. This is evident, if we compare the genuine writings of the Fathers with those counterfeit Liturgies before mentioned; whereof some particular instances are given in the chapter following. The stinted forms at first were more brief, afterwards they were enlarged, and (as often it falleth out) by enlargement corrupted and defiled. Corruption by this means as a disease cleaving to the Liturgie, it is necessary it should be corrected, and thereby recovered to its first integrity or soundnesse. Thus Cardinal Quignonus by the commandment of Clement the seventh so changed the Romane Breviarie that for a great part it was more like the English book of prayers than the Romane Breviarie.

See Rivet;
Crit. sacr. spe-
cim. l. 1. cap.
3. & l. 4.

Edl. censure.
pag. 10. Jew-
el Against
Hard. art. 1.
div. 5.

Gratian. De-
cret. dist. 15.
cap. 3. Bell.
De Missa, l. 2.
cap. 17, & 20.
Polydor. Virg.
De inventor.
rev. l. 5. cap. 10.
See Gentillet.
Exam. Concil.
Trid. l. 4. sess.
22.
Præfat. ad
Paul. 3. in
Breviar. Rom.
Ex sacra potis-
simam scriptu-
ra & probatis
sanctorum hi-
storiarum confe-
ctum. Rair. De
idololat. l. 1.
cap. 1. §. 4.

ric. And the English Liturgie gathered according to the module of the Ancients, the purest of them, is not a collection out of the Masse-book, but a refining of that Liturgie which heretofore had been stained with the Masse. And if those things were unjustly added to the Liturgie, they might be and were justly cast out. If it was wholly taken out of the Masse-book, I should desire further to know how the Masse-book came to have those things in which are found in the book of Common prayers, sound and holy for matter, and directly contrary to Antichristianisme. If these things were in the book before, then all things therein were not of Antichrist, but he had usurped them; and it is lawfull for the true man to lay claim to his goods whereever he find them. If they were not in the Masse-book, then all things are not taken out of it, but somethings restored out of purer Antiquity, which the man of sinne had wickedly expunged. The ministers of Lincoln never judged the use of the Book unlawfull, never thought it lawfull to separate from the prayers of the congregation, never refused to use the book, though in some things they desired to be excused. The churches of God have been evermore taught to prize and esteem these main and fundamentall truths and ordinances of worship at an higher rate then that some petty dislike of this or that in the externall form, when the matter is sound and good, should cause Separation. The conclusion in brief is, That our Service-book is not a translation of the Masse, but a restitution of the ancient

See Act. & Mon. vol. 3. pag. 1631. Of Dr Taylours testimony concerning our service-book. Mr Deeringe testimony is well known.

Liturgie, wherein sundry prayers are inserted, used by the Fathers, agreeable to the scriptures.

Causelesse separation from the externall communion with any true church of Christ, is the sinne of schisme. But to separate from the prayers of the congregation simply because a stinted form is used, is causelesse separation from the externall communion of the church. Weigh all the reasons brought to prove it lawfull, and they will be found too light. If we look to our guide and captain, Christ doth not goe before us therein. Dare any man affirm that they be not met together in the name of Christ, or that he is not present in the midst of them that joyn together in a stinted Liturgie? Is there any duty publick or private which God requireth of people holding communion together in ordinances of worship which may not be performed of each to other when a stinted form of prayer is used without Separation? But by that unwarrantable course of voluntary separation they make an unlawfull rent in the church, deprive themselves of the comfort of Gods ordinances, weaken the faith of many, cause divisions among brethren, and advantage the adversaries of true religion.

CHAP. IX.

It is lawfull for a Christian to be present at that service which is read out of a book in some things faultie both for form and matter.

ONe reason alledged to prove the lawfulnessse and necessity of Separation from our publick service in particular is this, That the prayer-book in question is corrupt in many things: which is thus amplified; The matter of some petitions is such as we cannot say Amen to it in faith; as in the collect on the XII. Sunday after Trinitie it is prayed that God would forgive us those things whereof our consciences are afraid, and give unto us that our prayers dare not presume to ask, &c. To omit divers others, the very fitting of Collects to certain dayes, for holy fasts and feasts not sanctified by God, savour of superstition; as speciall prayers for Lent, serving to countenance the keeping of it as a religious fast, &c. the manner of praying, vain repetitions, as the often repeating of the Lords prayer, and GLORY TO THE FATHER, and LORD HAVE MERCY UPON US, &c. disorderly responsories, the clerk taking part of the prayer out of the ministers mouth, &c. Moreover, the book perverteth the right use of the scriptures, dismembreth and misapplieth them for making of gospels, epistles, lessons, and collects appointed for feasts of mens devising, and derived from the Papists; and it reteineth a corrupt translation of the psalmes, and bringeth into the church Apocryphal writings,

Copy of a Letter, pag. 24.

Apologie or defense of such true Christi. pag. 68. leaf. 6.

things and the errours contained in them. To them that look at all humane Liturgies as images forbidden by the second commandment, this objection is of small force; because the thing it self, and not the corruption cleaving to the Liturgie, is disallowed. But lest this accusation should breed scruple in the minds of some not altogether disaffected to stinted forms of prayer or Liturgies, I will examine not the qualitie of the exceptions whether justly or unjustly taken, but the weight of the reason, if the particulars should be granted. For this objection it self doth free the Liturgie from grosse errours, either fundamentall or such as border thereupon, respecting faith or practice, in the prayers themselves or that which concerneth the administration of the sacraments. For the corruptions objected, are Misapplication of some text si of scripture, Frequent repetitions of the same things, Disordered responsories, and Breaking petitions asunder, &c. and these not dispersed throughout the whole book, but in some passages onely; which concern not the main grounds and chief heads of Christian religion, but are such faults or slips as may peaceably be tolerated amongst brethren. Therefore not to insist upon any particulars mentioned, I lay down this proposition, That a Christian may lawfully and with good conscience be present at such service and prayers which are read out of a book, though somethings therein are or may be supposed to be faultie for form or matter, in things not fundamentall nor bordering thereupon, not pernicious or
noxious,

noxious, but such as may be tolerated amongst brethren; & these not dispersed through the whole body of the book, but in some passages onely. It is one thing to allow corruption, another to be present at the service of God where something is done corruptly. For the Lord chargeth us to keep our selves free from all pollution; but alloweth not to separate from abuses, unlesse he be pleased to go before, and as he goeth before us. It is one thing to approve of abuses in a Liturgie, another to tolerate what we cannot reform. For a Liturgie should be framed so, not that things may be construed well, but that they cannot be construed amisse. But many things may be suffered which are not so well ordained, when it is not in our power to redresse them. The Lord needeth not mans lie, neither doth he allow us to do evil that good may come thereof: and therefore I must not subscribe to an error against conscience, though never so innocent, nor professe approbation of that which in conscience I cannot allow, though never so small, to the intent I might enjoy externall communion with the church of God in the ordinances of worship. But I must tolerate many things for the maintenance of peace and unitie, and the preservation of Gods worship: For if there be not mutuall toleration and forbearance, but each man will rigidly stand upon his own opinion and presse others to be of his mind and follow his practice in all things and every tittle, of necessitie all things must fall into confusion, and the church be rent almost into as many pieces as there be men.

The

Argum. 1.

The proposition is proved, first, Because they that alledge the foresaid faults or corruptions against communicating with us in our publick Liturgie or stinted prayers, do themselves put small strength or none at all in this reason. For suppose a chapter be somewhat unfitly divided, and break off in the midst of the matter, or now and then separate verses which should go together, or a verse be ill distinguished, or the preacher misalledge a text of scripture, or something be found amisse in his prayer when he exerciseth his own gifts, must I of necessitie separate from that ordinance of God, or reject the good for that which is amisse? Hereunto this answer is returned; *When the minister exerciseth his own gift, Gods ordinance is observed, wherewith I may communicate in praying as well as preaching, notwithstanding his infirmities in either, which are but personall: and in such cases the rule warranteth men to trie all things and to hold that which is good, 1. Thess. 5. 21. But when the Liturgie is read, an ordinance which is not of God but of man is introduced into Gods worship contrary to the second commandment, and therefore I must reject it, and have no communion with it.* Is not this in plain terms to grant, that the corruptions alledged can be no cause of Separation, but this onely, Because it is the devise of man. The corruptions alledged are not the cause, because they may be found in translations, the distinction of chapters and verses, the preaching of the word, and the prayers of the minister, when he exerciseth his own gifts, from which we must not separate,

*Copie of a Letter,
pag. 26.*

rate, and where presence is not approbation. But whatsoever is objected touching abuses, the whole building leaneth upon this foundation, and this alone, That stunted prayer is the devise of man. And this objecting of abuses in this question is the devise of man, because it is brought in to ensnare the simple-hearted Christian when other grounds will not hold, and yet in plain terms it is disclaimed as soon as it is alledged.

stunted popish worship and ministration, which being never appointed by Christ but devised by man is an abomination to God.

Whatsoever worship is offered up to God by the minister, is in their name, and so the action of the assembly then present, who are to declare their assent by saying *Amen* if it be lawfull, if otherwise, to call upon their minister to fulfill the ministry which he hath received of the Lord, Col. 4. 17. and, as occasion shall require, to proceed further, to declare their dislike, in such a manner as is meet, either by absenting themselves from it, or otherwayes declaring their dislike, so as the whole church may take notice of it.

Whatsoever worship is offered up to God by the minister, whether in prayer conceived by himself or devised by others, it is in the name of the congregation: but every phrase, petition or branch of petition is not approved by their presence, silence, or saying *Amen* to the prayers in generall, as in the former passage is acknowledged. The presence of the people was never deemed interpretatively a consent to every thing that was there done. The prayers which for matter God disalloweth we ought to disallow, but as God disalloweth them, and as he calleth us

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forth

Treatise of the ministr. of England, pag. 34.
The second way whereby they profane Christs intercession, is by offering up in Christs name and mediation their devised

Object. 1.

Ans.

forth to bear witnesse to his truth. But it is one thing to tolerate, another to approve; one thing to disallow the method or form, another the matter; one thing privately to dislike, another openly to witnesse against a thing as in no wise to be born withall; one thing to speak when we are called forth, another to thrust our selves forth unadvisedly. Some things are to be born with in brethren whereof we are not bound so much as to admonish them, unlesse we be intirely familiar and of intimate acquaintance: Some things we must bear with though upon admonition they be not amended. The people must bear with some infirmities in their minister, both in preaching and prayer, as he must with some wants in them, without so much as taking notice of them to admonish by way of censure: And if upon admonition he cannot be of their minds in every thing, they must not reject and cast him off, no more then he is to cut them off because in every point they conform not to his pleasure. If the parties be stubborn, and will not heare admonitions, but rather grow more perverse and desperate, even to rent and tear in pieces such as seek to reclaim them, we are not bound to make known our judgement and profession unto them, unlesse we be lawfully called of God thereunto. And if the greater part be in error and so stiff that they would sooner persecute the better then reform, if it be not in matters fundamentall or bordering thereupon, or noxious and pernicious to be concealed, I know not that either the innocent is allowed

Sins are either
controvertible
or manifest:
If controverti-
ble and doubt-
ful, men ought
to bear one
with anothers
different
judgement; if
they do not,
but any for
this make a
breach of Se-
paration, they
sin. *(Ainsw.
Against Mr
Bern. reaf.
reproved, pag.
179.*

lowed to separate from the exercises of religion for that cause, or bound to admonish them of their error. He that taught to suffer the tares rather than to pluck up the wheat with them, hath shewed a reason for this judgement. *This I do infinitely grieve at, (saith Augustine) that many most wholesome precepts of Divine scripture are little regarded, and in the mean time all is so full of many presumptions, that he is more grievously found fault with who during his Octaves toucheth the earth with his naked foot then he that shall bury his soul in drunkenness.* And after, *I cannot approve them, and I think they are to be cut off wheresoever we have power. Many of these things, for fear of scandalizing many holy persons, or provoking those that are turbulent, I dare not freely disallow.* That every private Christian should in publick manner question the doctrine of his minister or the prayers of the congregation, and declare his dislike in whatsoever is not agreeable to his particular opinion, in such manner as is mentioned, is neither commanded of God, nor consonant to right reason, is not agreeable to order, peace, love, or Christian moderation, and of necessitie must fill the church with confusion, disorder, rents, and schismes.

*Matth. 13. 19.**See Calvin. Epist. 117.**August. Epist. 119.*

*Object. 2.
Copie of a Letter, pag. 32.
Apolog. or Def. of such true Christ. Pet. 3. pag. 68.
reas. 3.
Answ.*

If reading the Liturgie be the praying which Gods word alloweth, we are bound in conscience to apply our selves unto it as Gods ordinance; and not we onely but also all the churches throughout the world: If not, we are bound to witnes against it.

Here the reason taken from the faults of our Liturgie is plainly dismissed out of the field: For our

Liturgie is to be witnessed against by this objection, not because it is erroneous or faulty, not for the matter or manner of imposition, but simply because it is not the Liturgie appointed by Christ in the New Testament. And many things are here confounded which should have been distinguished. Prayer is the ordinance of God, and all Christians are bound in conscience to apply themselves unto it: But the forms of prayer may be divers; all allowed, because none is necessary or determined: and therefore though allowed, no man is bound in conscience precisely to apply himself unto any one and none other; much lesse all churches. And as they are not bound unto any one, so neither to witnesse against it, a stinted Liturgie being of the number of things lawfull but not determined by God.

Object. 3. Though all presence where sinne is acted contracteth not guilt, yet the danger is greatest when we are in the use of Gods ordinances.

Answ. It is one thing to be present where that which is sinne in it self absolutely and simply is acted, another to be present at the doing of some necessary duty wherein by accident somewhat is amisse. Now to joyn in prayer or participation of the sacrament, is to communicate in the necessary duties of piety, not in sinne; and if ought be done amisse, it is by accident, not by it self. And presence there, though sinne be committed by one or other, is lesse dangerous, because it is not free and voluntary but necessary and enjoyned. We are not left at liberty to come or not, as please our selves, but commanded.

commanded under pain of sinne to be there present: and he that calleth will preserve from danger, and accept of our service which he commandeth. And if presence was dangerous, yet it is not unlawfull: for by watchfulnesse the danger might be prevented, and not by separation or withdrawing our selves from the worship it self. If there be danger, I must be vigilant and circumspect, but I must not shut the doore against Christ when he knocketh, nor refuse to come unto Christ when he inviteth to sup with him. And if all be granted, nothing is here alledged but what might be said against communicating with ministers who have their weakneses, or use a stinted form of their own devising ordinarily, or be of different opinions, either in prayer or sacrament: and if we must hold communion with none who dissent from us in any jote or tittle, we must never joyn or not long continue in any congregation.

The personall miscarriages of private persons *Object. 4.* are not so perillous as the evil acts of the minister whom I make my mouth to God in prayer. Neither do the errours of individuall men tainted with corruptions, voluntarily broched in prayer or sermon, cast that defilement upon them who joyn together, as do the unwarrantable opinions of the church, and the ministration upon such publick commandment.

It is a good rule in Divinity oft to be thought upon, That every distinction in matters of faith or religion not grounded upon or warranted by the scripture is an humane devise. For is not this to *Answ.*
adde

If this were a good ground, that every one approveth of the evill done in matter or manner where he is present, none could live with good conscience in any society of men on earth. Persons so minded are best live alone; for with others they will keep no peace, *Robins. Treatise Of the lawfulness, &c. pag. 31.*

adde to the word of God, to lay down an opinion as from God which is not to be found in his word at all? Now to apply this to the present matter in hand, I desire to know from what scripture this distinction can be warranted, That the personall errours of the minister in his voluntary administration of the sacraments or prayer do not defile, though I do not publickly testifie dislike, or absent my self; but errours committed in the administration by publick commandment do pollute all that be present. Reason why presence should pollute in one case more then the other none can be given. Calling from God to testifie dislike it may be I have in neither, but least in the latter: It being more tolerable for private persons to rebuke the slips and errours of their minister in voluntary administration, then for a man to controll the order established by publick authority and common consent, when he is not in speciall called thereunto. If this distinction be of weight, it would go best with the church to have no settled order amongst them: for so long as the faults and corruptions be onely personall they defile not them that be present at the ordinances; but personall they are untill they be established by common consent or publick authority. Moreover, by this rule one member may sooner cast out the whole church then the whole church can cut off one member: For the church must not cut off a member but upon weighty consideration and apparent just cause, and that after conviction, with much long-suffering and patience; but if this objection

jection hold true,) one member must openly rebuke the church, or withdraw from communion with the church, for a stinted Liturgie, or for some slip or fault there committed, perhaps questionable, at least tolerable among brethren.

Is not my joyning with them that sinne to be reputed an appearance thereof, when I professe not dislike thereof?

Object. 5.

It is one thing to joyn with men in sin, another to joyn with them necessarily in the worship of God, though for the manner of administration something be done amisse. If I professe not dislike of what I judge amisse, having no calling thereunto, my joyning in prayer is no appearance of evil to a right-discerning eye, because I am necessarily called there to attend upon the Lord in his holy ordinances. Necessary attendance upon his master excuseth the servants presence in many companies where he seeth and heareth much evil which he cannot amend nor reprove: and shall not necessary attendance upon Jesus Christ justly and truly excuse the faithfull? To say nothing, that this exception is crosse to the former, and if these exceptions be laid together, we shall find nothing but going backward and forward, one denying what the other affirmeth.

Ans.

If the faithfull by the approbation of our Saviour Christ and his Apostles were present at Divine ordinances as much or more corrupted then they can be supposed to be with us, then for such

Argum. 2.

There were in the Jewish Church in Christs time, and in divers

of the Apostolicall churches afterwards, more and greater errors taught then are in any of all the churches of England, *Robins. Treat. Of the lawfulnessse of bearing,*

corruptions

corruptions we are not voluntarily to withdraw our selves : For defilement is feared without cause by simple presence, where Christ requireth and approveth our presence, and hath promised to be present with us by his grace. But the faithfull by the commandment and approbation of Christ have been present at Divine ordinances as much or more corrupted then they can be supposed to be with us ; For the scribes and Pharisees sinned grievously in corrupting the law with false glosses, in so much that they neither taught nor practiced what was necessary to salvation : They taught many things directly contrary to the law ; as, if a child had vowed not to relieve his parents, he was bound to keep his vow, and neglect them : They defiled the worship of God with their vain inventions : And it may well be thought their praying was answerable to their preaching, cold, fruitlesse, corrupt and rotten many wayes : Nevertheless the faithfull held communion and fellowship with them in the worship of God, not in their corruptions, and that by the approbation and commandment of Christ himself. Our Saviour doth not tell the faithfull they were to call upon the Pharisees to fulfill their ministry which they had received, and, as occasion should require, proceed further to declare their dislike in such manner as is meet, either absenting themselves or other wayes declaring their dislike, so as the whole church may take notice of it : But his commandment is, they should heare them so long as they sit in Moses chair.

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*Matth. 5. 18,
19, 20.*

*Loquitur hic
Dominus proprie de justitia
inhærente, quæ consistit in bonis
operibus, ut patet tum ex
collatione cum justitia
Pharisæorum, tum ex sequen-
te declaratione præceptorum
Decalogi, Pisc. in Matth. 5.
20 Schol. Sculiet Exercit. l. 2. cap.
19. Rainold, Confer. with
Hart, eb. 7. div. 4.
Matth. 15. 5,
6.
Rainold, Confer. with
Hart, eb. 7. div. 4. p. 268,
269.*

It is true our Saviour doth not approve their corrupt glosses and sinfull inventions, but doth sharply reprove them himself, and admonish others to let them alone, and beware of their leaven, but not to forsake the assembly or absent themselves from the ordinances of worship. From which it followeth evidently, that simple presence at Divine ordinances is not consent or approbation of the corruptions therein practiced; and that we must leave and forsake some in respect of familiar conversation, with whom we may hold outward communion in the exercises of religion. The sinne of Eli's sonnes in prophaning the holy things of God was exceeding great; but Elkanah, Hannah and Samuel did not partake with the sinnes of the priests, in that they did not abstain from the Lords sacrifices. The behaviour of the Corinthians in their unreverent, scandalous, and almost prophane coming to the Lords table was foul and corrupt, yet the faithfull did not forbear, nor the Apostle charge them to absent themselves from the Lords table. The famous church of Rome was so weak and feeble in the duties of government as they did not or could not separate from them such as preached Christ contentiously and with spitefull minds against the Apostle, and the greater number of that church did corruptly demean and carry themselves therein; and yet the Apostle never taught the rest to separate and have no communion with them in the ordinances of worship.

Knowledge before-hand that such corrupt ad-

A a

ministra-

Matth. 23. 12,
13.
Chrysost. in
Hebr. Hem. 34.
Augustin. con-
tra lit. Petil.
l. 2. cap. 6.
Matth. 23. 13,
14.
Matth. 16. 6.

1. Sam. 2. 17,
18, 19, 20.
1. Sam. 1. 1, 2,
3.

1. Cor. 11. 22.

Phil. 1. 16.

Phil. 2. 20, 21.

Object. 1.

ministration will be used maketh our joyning with the assembly sinfull to us ; whereas if the evils were unexpected the danger would not be alike. And thus it was with them who congregated to heare the scribes and Pharisees.

Ans.

Our knowing of it maketh not our act the more or lesse an act of approbation. If I do an act wherein I do indeed approve of a thing, if I know the thing, I really approve of it upon knowledge ; if I know it not, I really approve of it, but ignorantly, *Robins.*
Treat. of the
etc pag. 30.

Object. 2.

Ans.

It is not for them that earnestly oppose all humane inventions to ward off a blow by humane devices. When God commandeth my presence at his ordinance, why should the corruption foreknown in the manner of administration, without my consent or approbation, any more defile, then that which falleth out unexpected? Or if it should, nothing can be alledged more impertinently. For the corruptions of the Pharisees in perverting the law were ordinary and common, well known to all men, and so reproved by our Saviour as a thing notorious. And the like may be said of the disorders in the churches of Corinth, and Rome: for if the knowledge thereof came to the Apostle absent and at that time in prison, by the information of the brethren, of necessitie it must be known to the members of the churches. The faithfull therefore when they joyned in the ordinances of worship with these assemblies, neither did nor could pretend ignorance of these things.

There is a broad difference to be put betwixt the sinne committed by persons with whom I communicate, and the corruption put upon the ordinance in which I communicate.

If the sinne of him with whom I communicate be manifest and known, the ordinance of God is corrupted by it one way or other. And if I be defiled

defiled with all known corruption whatsoever, it is not materiall to the point in hand how those corruptions differ in their specificall nature. The question is, Whether all presence at the ordinances of God in some respect corruptly or disorderly administred, contract guilt in him that is onely present in obedience to Gods commandment, and hath no calling from God to reſtifie peculiar or ſpeciall diſlike. It may be of ſome uſe here to ſhew what corruptions be fundamentall and what not, what pernicious to be tolerated and what not, when a man hath a calling to reſtifie againſt abuſes and when not: But to ſpeak of the ſpecificall difference betwixt abuſes of the ſame kind or degree, is quite wide of the mark. This will eaſily be yielded, becauſe communion in the ordinances of worſhip is as well denied when wicked men are admitted to the ſacrament as when it is adminiſtred in a deviſed or ſtinted Liturgie, as it is called.

It was never questioned by right-believing Chriſtians, but the faithfull by Gods approbation might hold communion with the churches in the ordinances of worſhip, for ſome ages after the death of the apoſtles. The church continued a virgin all the dayes of the apoſtles, as Hegeſippus

Argum. 3.

Euseb. Hiſt. l. 3.

cap. 32. & l. 4.

cap. 22. Gr.

Chryſoſtom. in

1. Cor. *II. 36.* Verè tum cœlum Eccleſia fuit, Spiritu tunc adminiſtrante, cuncta Eccleſiæ capita moderante, &c. Nunc verò veſtigia tantùm rerum illarum tenemus. *P. Ramus Epiſt. ad Carolum Lotharingum, an. 1570.* de quindecim à Chriſto ſeculis primum verè eſſe aureum; reliqua quò longiùs abſcederent eſſe nequiora ac deteriora. *Iſidor. Peluſ. l. 3. Epiſt. 408.* Florente Eccleſiâ & nondum morbo laborante, Divinæ gratiæ circa eam velut chorum agebant, ſancto Spiritu res adminiſtrante, atque antiſtitum unumquemque incitante, ac Eccleſiam in cœlum convertente.

A a 2

noteth:

noteth : But immediately after their death innumerable evils crept in & began to spring amaine: nevertheless, the faithfull might, did, and ought to hold communion together in the proper and substantiall means of worship. That many things were amisse in the churches, is not denied; and that the faithfull through ignorance did offend in many things: but in this, that they held communion notwithstanding such abuses amongst them, they are blamelesse. For a time the faithfull did lie hid in Babylon by Gods approbation, untill the exhortation was given from heaven to come out of her and touch no unclean thing. Not that they might touch any unclean thing at any time, that is, either in practice or consent and liking stain themselves with the corruptions of the world: But that they might lie hid in the midst of much confusion, and neither like nor consent unto the evils which they did bewail, but could not reform. That exhortation from heaven, *Come out of her my people, come out of her, &c.* some interpret of a locall departing out of the citie of Rome, as Lot went out of Sodom: and that interpretation the text seemeth to favour, because the very outward destruction of the place is in that chapter menaced; and therefore the removing out of the very place, in avoydance of the mischief coming upon it, forewarned: But most commonly it is applied to a spirituall coming out of Babylon, in separating from the societie and communion of that church wherein they could lie hid no longer without defilement. And hence some conclude, that this departure

Apoc. 18. 4.
Brightm. in
Apoc. 18. 4.

2. Cor. 6. 17.
Hebr. 13. 13.
1. Joh. 2. 19.

departure was to be made at a certain definite time, when God was pleased to go before the faithfull and furnish them for this end and purpose: But untill the time of freedom was proclaimed, the faithfull did and might so lie hid in Babylon as not to be partakers of her sinnes. For there is a certain order of the Revelation, fitted to the order of times: And as there is a time to speak, and a time to keep silence, but no time to lie, so there is a time for the church to fight and lie hid, but no time to dissemble or defile her self. And as the Israelites offended not when they removed not out of Egypt before Moses was sent thither of God, so neither did the faithfull transgresse, in that they departed not out of Babylonish captivitie before they were called of God, the time of liberty was proclaimed, and God shewed them whither to flie. To live in captivitie untill freedom be published, is a misery, not a sinne. In that condition care must be, to keep pure and undefiled, but not to run away without leave or licence from God. Whatsoever is to be thought of this application of the text, herein all orthodox interpreters consent and agree, that after the church was stained with manifold abuses, the faithfull did and ought to hold communion with her in the means of worship. But if simple presence be approbation of every thing that is judged to be done amisse in the worship of God, a Christian could at no time that can be named, in no age since the death of the apostles, hold communion with the church of God in the ordinances and

*See Symonds
Pisga Evang.
cap. 11. p. 209.
220. & cap. 12
pag. 246.*

*Cameron. Pra-
lect. de Eccles.
s. de Schisma-
te.
Carleton,
Consens. Eccl.
cathol. de
Script. cap. 11*

means of grace. For it is as lawfull to be present at the worship, prayers or administration which is read out of a book in some things faulty, as to be present at that service where the scriptures are read out of a translation in many things faulty and corrupt, in which many things are added, diminished, altered and changed. But in the primitive churches the faithfull must be present, if at all, at the worship of God when the scriptures were read out of a faulty translation: For to say nothing of the corruptions of the Seventy Interpreters, which (as Bellarmine confesseth) had gathered many stains and blots in three hundred yeares, of necessity the translations which were derived from it, of which sort were most in the primitive church, can be no lesse corrupt. For no man before Hierome ever translated the books of the Old Testament out of the originall into Latine, but out of the Seventy: And the same may well be thought of most vulgar translations, where the Greek or Latine were not in use. And if the Septuagint was corrupted in many things at that time, the translations drawn thence cannot be pure. Amongst many and divers Latine translations, which Augustine saith cannot be numbered, there was one more common then the rest and better esteemed, by Hierome called the Vulgar, who disliketh it, and preferreth the translation of Symmachus and Theodotion above it. If we give credit to ancient writers, we shall find

Bellarmin. De verbo Dei, lib. 2. cap. 6.
August. De civ. Dei, lib. 18. cap. 43. & De doctrina Christi, lib. 2. cap. 11.
See Chamier. Panstrat. rom. 1. lib. 12. cap. 1. & lib. 13. cap. 3, 4, 5, &c. & lib. 14. cap. 2, 3, &c.
Platina De vit. Pontif. Damas. 1.
Hieron. in Isa. 4.
 The worst translation that this day is commonly used either in the English, or in the French, or in the Dutch tongue, is farre better and truer then that old Common translation in the Latine, *Jewel. D. f. of the Apost. pars 1. cap. 1. div. 1.*

that

that there were divers customs in the church, and rites in the administration of the sacraments, not mentioned in scripture, and some of them favouring more of superstition than of devotion, which the Papists themselves have not onely laid aside but condemned, though of ancient and long continuance.

De lapsis. Nec derelicto cibo & poculo Domini, ad profane conuiviali potestate propinquamus, &c. accipientibus ceteris locus ejus advenit. *August. epist. 23. ad Bonifac. & 107. ad Vitalum.* *Anselm. in leg. Francor. capit. lib. 1. cap. 155.* *De gest. Eman. In modo baptizandi Ethiop. Bruxellæ edito, An. 1550.* *Just. Martyr, qu. 155.* *Basil. De Spirit. S. cap. 27.* *Concil. Nicen. can. 20.* *Tert. De coron. milit. cap. 3.* *Hieron. Advers. Lucifer. cap. 4.* *Ambr. lib. 3. De Sacram. cap. 1.* *Cyp. De spectacul. Tert. De Orat. & lib. 2. ad uxor. Hieron. Apol. ad Pammach. Concil. Cesar. august. can. 3.* See *Whitak. De Script. contr. 1. qu. 6. cap. 12.* *Basil. Lydiat. Waldens. tom. 1. pag. 37, 38.* *Cham. Panstrat. tom. 4. lib. 4. cap. 16.* *Whitak. De Sacram. pag. 332, 333, &c.*

The particulars are many and well known: so that ancient custom is not plea sufficient to prove a thing good, nor some abuse crept into and continued in the church cause sufficient why we should voluntarily absent our selves from the Lords ordinances. In the second primitive church (as some distinguish) if not the first, they had a stinted form of Liturgie, not onely for lessons, psalmes, epistles and gospels, and professions of faith, but in prayers, for matter and manner not much unlike to ours. To the praise of

vix sex aut octo Latina ecclesia nunc observat. *Martin. Paris. De Tradit. part. 3. cap. de autoritate canon. Apostolicor.* In illis continentur multa quæ temporum corruptione non plenè observantur, aliis, pro temporis & materie qualitate, aut oblietatis, aut totius ecclesie magisterio merito abrogatis. *In the Greek Liturgies not before any other publick prayer, but immediately before the holy ministration, the Priest saith, Ἄνω ἡμῶν τὸς ἀσπλάς. Cyprian. in orat. Dom. Serm. 6. Sacerdos ante ora-*

God

tionem præfatione præmissâ parat fratrum mentes, dicendo, **SURSUM CORDA**, ut dum respondet plebs, **HABEMUS AD DOMINUM**, admoneatur. *Chrysost. ex variis locis in Matth. Hom. 9. Clamamus in conspectu sacrificii, SURSUM CORDA. August. in Psalm. 39. & De dono persever. lib. 2. cap. 13. See Jewel, Defen. part 2. chap. 14. div. 2. Chrysost. in 2. Cor. Hom. 18. The priest and the people at the ministration talk together: The Priest saith, THE LORD BE WITH YOU: the people answereth, AND WITH THY SPIRIT. Of the Lords prayer, Hieron. lib. 3. Contra Pelag. Apostoli Dominico præcepto ad celebrationem Eucharistiæ adhibuere Dominicam precationem. August. in epist. 59. ad Paulin. qu. 3. Quam totam petitionem fere omnis ecclesia Dominica oratione concludit. In Liturg. Chrysostomi; chorus, PATER NOSTER: altâ voce Sacerdos, QUONIAM TUUM EST REGNUM. See Cham. Panstrat. tom. 4. lib. 6. cap. 9. §. 11, 12, 13, &c. Of the Constantino-politano Creed, see Concil. Toletan. 3. can. 2. Of HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, &c. Concil. Vasens. An. 444. can. 6. Of CHRIST HAVE MERCY, Concil. Vasens. can. 5. Basil. epist. 63. August. epist. 178. Of ALLELUIA, or PRAISE THE LORD, Sozom. lib. 7. cap. 19. Of GLORY BE TO THE FATHER, Sozom. lib. 3. cap. 19. Concil. Vasens. can. 7. Platin. De vit. Pontif. Damas. 1. Græcis usitatum preces terminare aliquâ Doxologiâ. Hinc psalmis addere solitos, GLORIA PATRI; Salutationi Angelicæ, *Ὁ ὁ ἅγιος ὁ θεὸς ὁ πατήρ ὁ υἱὸς ὁ ἄγιος πνεῦμα*. Cham. Panstr. tom. 1. lib. 12. cap. 13. §. 32, 33. Of the abrenunciation in baptisme, Cyrill. Hierosolym. Catech. mystag. 1. Chrysost. Hom. 21. ad popul. Antioch. Renuncio Satanæ & omnibus operibus ejus, & pompis ejus, & omni cultui ejus. Constit. Apost. lib. 7. cap. 42. Tert. De Spectacul. cap. 4. & omnibus inventis ejus, & omnibus qui sub ipso sunt. Ambr. Hexam. lib. 1. cap. 4. & mundo ejus. Ambr. De iis qui myster. initiant. cap. 2. Cyrill. Alexandr. lib. 7. contr. Jul. Dæmoniorum turbis valedico, omnem pompam eorum & cultum respuo. See Cham. Panstr. tom. 4. lib. 6. cap. 14. §. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. Of Sureties and Godfathers, see Cham. ibid. §. 20, 21, 22. Zepper. De polit. Eccles. lib. 1. cap. 14. & lib. 2. cap. 10. Balthas. Lyd. Not. in disp. Taborit. tom. 2. cap. 5. De Patrimis. The Brethren in Egypt, saith Augustine epist. 121. are reported to have many prayers, but every of them very short, as if they were darts thrown out with a sudden quickness. Not onely the books called Apocrypha, but Clements epistles (Euseb. lib. 4. cap. 23.) and the lives of the Martyrs were read. Concil. Carthagin. 3. can. 47.*

God be it spoken, our Liturgie for purity and soundness may compare with any Liturgie used in the third and fourth ages of the church: And if in those times the faithfull might lawfully hold communion in the ordinances of worship, we cannot at this day lawfully withdraw ourselves by reason of such faults as be objected. This

I mention,

I mention, that we might learn to acknowledge Gods mercy, walk worthy of what we have received, and strive forward towards perfection by all lawfull means. Long before the Lord called his people to come out of Babylon, what faults soever can be objected against our Liturgie were found in theirs. The faithfull therefore may lawfully be present at our service, notwithstanding the faults objected against it. For the Lord did not onely wink at his peoples weaknesse and ignorance for the time, but approve of their non-separation untill he was pleased to call them forth. Neither can it be imagined, that they might hold communion in other ordinances but not in their stinted Liturgies: for in those times of all other parts the stinted Liturgies were most pure, God of his endlesse mercy so providing for his church and the comfort of his people in those hard and evil times when the doctrine was miserably & dangerously corrupted, in respect of Merit of works, and Invocation of Saints, &c. the Liturgies were long preserved pure and free, whereby the faithfull might be present with more comfort and freedome of conscience. This one thing due-ly considered would put an end to many scruples,

Liturgie of Basil there is no mention made of the Offering of the body and bloud of Christ by the priest, nor of Redeeming the living or dead by this work. In the Liturgie attributed to James there is no propitiatory sacrifice to be made by the priest, but a mysticall: no private Masse, but all must communicate: a confession against merit: The sacrament is to be administred in both kinds. Jacobus Pamelus scriptor Pontificius ingens volumen Liturgiarum Latinarum edidit Coloniae excusum Ann. 1571. in quibus frequens mentio communionis laicorum sub utraque specie, nulla missæ privatæ, vel sacrificii propitiatorii, vel aliarum superstitionum impiarum, quæ postea irreperant, si quis præsertim secula post tempora Apostolorum observet. Illyric. Catalog.

Collectæ antiquæ nihil habent de intercessione aut meritis, nè Apostolorum quidem, &c. Balth. Lyd. Not. in disput. Taborit. pag. 133. In the

12th. lib. 1. pag. 70, 71. I am assured, saith *Masius, Prasat. in Anaph. Basil.* they are free and exempt from that wicked doctrine of that infamous heretick Nestor: For having read a great volume of their solemn prayers which they make to God, I have found nothing that might offend any man of sound opinion in our religion: if it be not this, that I suspect them, because that they in many places call not the Virgin Mary, Mother of God; but in stead of this title they call her, The Mother of Light & Life.

and might serve to stop them who out of over-great heat and forwardnesse are ready to except against the means of their own comfort, and to cast off what God offereth because they cannot enjoy what they desire.

Object. 1. The snares of superstition are warily to be declined, because we are apt and prone to take infection thereby, it being a work of the flesh, and agreeable to our nature.

Ans.

For the practice and performance of duties simply morall & commanded in their kind, we ought to strain to the utmost, and to go as near the wind as may be: seeing nothing but apparent sin in the way can excuse the withdrawing from it, when occasion of enjoying it is offered, *Robins. Treatise Of the lawfulness of hearing &c. pag. 6.*

All sinne is to be shunned, and that at all times; but the danger of sinning onely is to be shunned by watchfulnesse and circumspection, not by omission or neglect of any duty that God calleth us unto or requireth at our hands. In a free state and condition the occasions of sin must be avoided, because no man is safe who is next to danger, and it is no point of wisdom to fish with a golden hook: But when God casteth a man upon the occasions of sin in the duties of religion, justice, or an honest calling, he must not omit the duty because of the occasion, but resist the occasion and watch over his heart that he be not hurt thereby. If a sowre herb or two grow in a good pasture, is it not better to heed the flock there then to suffer them to starve? The sheep of Christ are wise to discern betwixt things that differ, and know where to feed, and what to leave. And if superstition be dangerous; partiall, indiscreet, misguided

misguided zeal is sinfull, turbulent, and pernicious. Whence have most schismes arisen in the church, but even from hence, that some in place have been over-eager and peremptory to presse the members of the church to professe their belief or approbation of some errours, perhaps in themselves small and to be tolerated, which they could not professe with a good conscience, and not allow them communion in the church but upon such condition? Also the frequent drawing out of the sword of excommunication to cut off well-deserving members from visible society with the churches of God for small and trifling matters, is a great occasion and cause of schisme. *Whatsoever man or church, saith one, doth for any error of simple belief deprive any man so qualified as above either of his temporall life, or livelihood, or liberty, or the churches communion and hope of salvation, he is for the first unjust, cruel and tyrannous; schismaticall, presumptuous, and uncharitable for the second.* Wherefore such as have power in their hands, they are alwayes to remember that this power is given them not for destruction, or to shew their own greatnesse, but for the edification of others, and therefore never to be used but upon speciall and weighty considerations and occasions. He that striketh fiercely with his spirituall sword at feathers, doth alwayes either wound himself or wrest his arm. And of particular private persons it hath ever been most true, that a partiall, rigid, irregular adhering to some branches of holy doctrine hath been no

Chilling. Answer, part 1. chap. 4. paragr. 13.

Dr Jackson, Of the church.

Great zeal they have against the false church, ministry and worship so being, or by them conceived so to be, and against any appearing evil in the true, but little for that which is true and good, *Rebinf. ubi supra*, pag. 10.

lesse pernicious to themselves then troublesome to others: For the fond admiration of their zeal and forwardnesse in this one particular breedeth neglect of Christian watchfulnesse and constant uniform walking with God, disregard of Gods ordinances and of the good which may be gotten thereby, disesteem (if not contempt) of others who will not comply with them in the same way: and what can follow hereupon but contentions and jarres, surmises, censurings and uncharitableness, rents and divisions in the church? This danger is the greater, because it stoppeth the eare against advise and counsel: For being once perswaded that they and they onely do maintein the truth and rightly affect it, no reason will enter, no perswasion take place to the contrary, be it never so evident and apparent. And this is most preposterous, when the truths wherewith they are so enamoured and which they zealously affect be matters of small or least importance: for then the great and weighty truths, concerning the very life and soul of religion, and the substantiall means of grace, are undervalued in comparison of the other. We must therefore labour and watch so to keep our selves from the infection of superstition as not to foster indiscreet and partiall zeal, which admiring that which is of lesse importance thrusteth into over-vehement contentions, and lesseneth the due esteem of the great mercy the Lord hath shewed unto his church.

Argum. 4.

No particular member of a church may voluntarily

tarily break off externall communion with the church, or refuse to communicate in the publick service and worship of God, unlesse the Lord Jesus go before him therein and be his warrant; that is, unlesse Christ hath withdrawn the presence of his grace, or the party cannot be present without the guilt of hypocrisie or approbation of somewhat that is evil. For the members of the visible church must hold fellowship in faith and love, not onely one with another, but with all other visible churches, and all others intirely professing the faith of Christ, so farre as they hold communion with Jesus Christ. And therefore no member can lawfully break off externall communion with the true church of Christ but in that onely wherein and so farre as it hath broken off fellowship with Christ: For where Christ is, there is his church; and *where two or three are met together in his name, there is he in the midst among them.* He is that Prince that is in the midst of his people, who goeth in when they go in. And when Christ calleth his free voluntaries to assemble in prayer, or to partake at his table, and promisseth to be present with them, to heare their prayers, and refresh their souls with grace, it is not lawfull for a Christian to withdraw himself. But in a congregation where a stinted form is used, and that in some respects faulty here or there, Christ may be and is present in the midst among them; Christians are called to come, and may be present without guilt of hypocrisie or approbation of the least evil. To leave communion when we be obliged by God to

Matth. 18. 20.

Ezek. 46. 10.

See Lavater

in Ezek. 46.

10.

Rom. 3. 8.

He who
would have us
receive the
weak in faith,
whom God
hath received,
would not
have us refuse
the fellowship
of churches in

that which is good, for weaknesse in them of one sort or other. And this we have so plainly and plentifully commended unto us, both by the prophets, yea by Christ himself in the Jewish church, and apostles and apostolicall men in the first Christian churches (in which many errors and evils of all kinds were more then manifest, and the same oft-times both so farre spread and deeply rooted as the reforming of them was rather to be wished then hoped for) as that no place is left for doubting,
&c. Robins. ubi supra, pag. 15.

continue in it, is no lesse then schisme according to the nature of it. Obliged by God we are to hold communion with the true churches of Christ in his true worship and service so farre as it may be without sin and wickednesse on our parts: So that though there be some errors or ignorances in the publick administration, yet if our belief of some error or approbation of disorder be not required to that communion, it is not lawfull to depart from the society of that church which professeth the saving truth of Christ intirely for substance, rightly mainteineth the dispensation of the sacraments, soundly calleth upon God in the mediation of Jesus Christ, and plentifully enjoyeth the means of grace. When corruption and externall communion be so involved that it is simply impossible to leave the corruptions unlesse we leave the externall communion of the church, a necessity of separation from that externall communion then lyeth upon us: But though errors or corruptions of some kind be not onely tolerated but established, mainteined, and pressed, yet if we can hold communion without approbation of the said errors or corruptions, Separation in that case is unjust, rash and unadvised, because the

Lord

Lord therein doth not go before us. The sin of Separation, if unjust, is so great and heinous, the ill consequences and mischiefs, so many and fearful, that all Christians should be well advised neither to lay stumbling-blocks before the feet of others, which might occasion their turning aside, nor to seek or catch occasions of departure, but rather to wait and tarry till they be assured that the Lord goeth before them. For the first, when the Anabaptists in Helvetia opposed humane inventions as unlawfull, they were by publick authority and with common consent abolished. And that of Irenæus is well known, *Variety of ceremonies commend the unitie of faith.* For the other part, the faithfull have ever tolerated weaknesses and infirmities in each other, and abuses in the church, so long as the foundation was held, and they agreed in the main. In the primitive church not onely some persons but whole congregations have doubted of many books of scripture, and yet lost not their dignity of true churches of Christ. How long did the faithfull wait and bear before they departed, or rather were driven by excommunication, sword, and fire out of Babylon? This hath been the judgement of the godly learned in all ages of the church. *They that for trifling and small causes, saith Irenæus, divide the body of Christ, &c. these can make no reformation of such importance as to countervail the danger of a division. When good men tolerate bad men, saith Augustine, which can do them no spirituall hurt, to the intent they may not be separated from those who are spirituallly*

*Zuingl. tom. 2.
De Bapt. pag.
70.*

*De heres. lib.
4. cap. 62.*

*Contr. Parm.
l. 2. cap. 11.*

Cap. 21.

Cusan. Catho-
lic. concord. l.
1. cap. 5.See Calvin.
epist. 379. &
Instit. lib. 4.
cap. 10. S. 22.
Damian a
Goes, De mori-
bus Æthiop.

ritually good, then there is no necessity to divide unity. And in another place, These two things reteined will keep such men pure and uncorrupted, that is, neither doing ill, nor approving it. Although faith be one *funiculus colligantia*, yet variety of opinions without pertinacy standeth with unity: but nothing is so contrary to the church as schisme and departure. This matter I will shut up with the saying of Zaga Bishop of Æthiope, and embassador of Prester John: *It is a miserable thing that Christian strangers should be so sharply reprov'd, as enemies, as I have been here; and other things which concern not the faith. But it should be farre more convenient to support all Christians, be they Graians, be they Armenians, be they Æthiopians, be they of any one of the seven Christian churches, with charity and love of Christ, and to permit them to live and converse amongst other Christian brethren without any injurie, because that we are all infants of one baptism, and do hold truly the true faith.* The conclusion is, That the externall communion of the church in publick worship is not to be forsaken for some faults, neither fundamentall nor noxious, which may be espied in her Liturgie.

Object. 1.

Robins. A-
gainst Bern.
pag. 16.

Though the bearing and forbearing not onely of small but even of great sinnes also must be for a time, yet it must be but for a time, and that is whilest reformation be orderly sought and procured. Lev. 19. 17. But what time hath wrought in the church of England all men see, growing dayly by the just judgement of God from evil to worse, and being never aforetime so impatient either

either of reformation or other good as at this day. Moreover, a man must so bear an evil as he be no way accessory unto it by forbearing any means appointed by Christ for the amending of it.

Errours or faults be of two sorts: Some grosse, notorious, manifest, such as a man cannot but see to be amisse unlesse he will shut his eyes against the light, and must amend, or there can be no hope of salvation: Others of quotidian incursion, frailty and infirmity, ignorance or mere weaknesse, such as godly men are not convinced of, or if they see them at some times to be amisse, yet in ordinary course they be overtaken with them, from which the most holy be not altogether free. In these latter though Christians must labour the help, cure and support of each other by all means lawfull, yet they must bear one with another, not for a time onely, but continually. For such are the ignorances and frailties of all men, that if they bear not one with another, of necessity they must break off all society one with another. If all that dissent in opinion in any circumstances of religion, if all that be judged too remisse or overzealous, or if every one that is waspish, rash, stiff in his own opinion, or laboureth under such like infirmity, must be cut off, I know not where we shall find a church upon earth. Besides, it is one thing to bear with faults for a season, when we have power in our hands to reform them; another, to hold communion with the church in the worship of God where such abuses are continued. Such as have power in their hands

Ans^r.

There are corruptions which eat out the very heart of a thing, as well as such as hinder the working onely, and stain the work, *Robins. Against Berr. pag. 67.*

As in a true church in respect of outward order there may be many false doctrines taught, so in a church false in respect of outward order there may be many sound and seasonable truths taught, *Robins. Treatise of the lawfulness, &c. The printers to the Christian reader.*

to reform should tolerate abuses for a time onely, *sc.* untill there be opportunity of reformation: But such as have not power in their hands to redresse abuses may and ought to hold communion with the church of God in the publick worship of God, notwithstanding such abuses continued: for the continuance of such corruptions is not the sin of him who hath used all good means for their removall, but cannot obtain it. The Lord never gave commandment to his people to depart from and forsake his ordinaances because such as ought did not reform but maintein abuses in his sanctu-
 ry. If they abode still in that corrupt society, and joyned in the publick worship of God, because they had not authority to redresse them; then it followeth, that communion in Gods ordinaances is not sin to them who mislike the corruptions that are allowed and practiced, pray, desire, and by all other good means seek reformation, but break not off society, because the Lord hath given them no authority so to do, goeth not before them therein: they should walk by their own light, and not by Gods commandment, nor the approved examples of the Saints recorded in scripture. For one or a few private Christians to break off society with the church in prayer or participation of the sacraments, because they are administred in a stinted Liturgie, or the corruptions pretended therein, is a greater disorder and corruption then any they can alledge in the Liturgie concerning prayer or administration of the sacraments: because in so weighty businesse they chal-
 lenge

lence that authority which Christ never committed to them, and go directly crosse to the order established by our Saviour Christ. But of that more at large in the chapters following.

CHAP. X.

It is lawfull to communicate in a mixt congregation where ignorant and prophane persons be admitted to the sacrament.

THIS is made an exception against communicating in our assemblies, that we are a mixt congregation, and that ignorant and prophane persons are admitted unto the Lords table. To trie the weight of this reason the better, we must remember that sinners which may come into question, are either secret, that is, not of publick note, though one or other, perhaps the minister himself, may know them in their course scandalous, or else notorious, such as are commonly defamed and known for evil, by evidence of fact and course, if not *juridicé*. The first sort sin in coming prophanely unto the Lords ordinances, and they pollute the holy things of God unto their own destruction, if they come without repentance and purpose of amendment: But they are not to be repelled, if they offer themselves, because though one know them to have sinned thus and thus, it is unknown to others, and so the sin is private and not openly known. Christ knew Judas his fetches, yet he suffered him: and though

*Dent. 19. 15.
Epiphan. in
Ancorato.
Nihil sine du-
obus tribusve
testibus geri
potest, Joseph.
Antiq. l. 4 c. 3.*

his treason was hidden and there were no witnesses of his intendment, yet his theft was acted, and not purposed onely. *De secretis non judicat ecclesia : Et privata scelera non habent vindictam.*

See Aquin.

Summ. 3. qu.

81. art. 2. &

qu. 80. art. 6.

Hieron. lib. 2.

contra Ruff.

Uni testi, ne

Catoni qui-

dem, est credi-

tum.

When it is not notorious and manifest that such a man hath lost his right to the sacrament, it ought not to be denied unto him in the face of the congregation: otherwise liberty should be granted to wicked ministers to punish with this punishment whomsoever they please. The law of God in all ecclesiasticall and civil punishments requireth either confession by the party of the fault which is committed, or else proof by witnesses. Augustine, tom. 9. lib. *De medicin. pæn. cap. 3.* is clear of this opinion, *Nos à communione quengquam prohibere non possumus, nisi aut spontè confessum, aut in aliquo iudicio ecclesiastico vel seculari nominatum atque convictum;* as he is cited by the glosse *ad 1. Cor. 5.* and by Aquinas in the place above mentioned. It is requisite for the common good and convenient order both of church and common-wealth, that all common favours which are publickly to be disposed and distributed according to the dignity of private persons, should be dispensed by publick ministers designed thereunto, not according to the private knowledge of this or that man, neither of that minister, but according to a publick and notorious cognisance. And whosoever doth by his offense against God lose his right and interest to the holy things of God, he must lose it in the face of the church before it can be denied him in the face of the congregation:

Justinian. Nov.

vell. 123. c. 11.

Omnibus au-

tem Episcopis

& Presbyteris

interdicere a-

liquem à sacra

communione,

antequam cau-

sa monstretur,

&c.

gregation: And he is to be judged (as in all other cases) not by any mans nor by any ministers private knowledge, but according to proofs and allegations. For the common good necessarily requireth, that such publick actions of this nature should be regulated by a kind of publick and not private knowledge, which once admitted into judicature, would soon fill up the church and state with a world of scandals, injuries and inconveniences. Grosse, notorious, scandalous sinners should be excluded from the sacrament, but yet according to the order and appointment of the Lord. *Cast not pearls before swine: give not holy things to dogs.* Therefore the primitive church about to administer, the Deacon cryed out against flagitious persons, *Τὰ ἁγία τοῖς ἀγίοις*, with which the charge in our Liturgie well suteth. Amongst the heathen some were accounted *βέβηλοι*, and *ἀμύητοι*, who were admitted into the entrance, but not into the temple: Whence among the Latines they are called * *profane*, because they stood before but might not enter the temple. Hence also was that question amongst the Heathen in their services, *Τίς τῶδε*; that is, *Who is here?* to which it was answered of the assembly, *Πολλοὶ καὶ ἀγαθοὶ*, that is, *Many and good.* Hence that of Calimachus in hymnis;

Ἐξὺς ἱερὸς βέβηλος ἀνατρεσκέ,

which Virgil expresseth thus,

*Procul ô procul este profani,
Conclamat vates.*

C c 3

And

Math. 7. 6.

* q. porro à fano, *Macrob. Saturn. l. 3. cap. 3.* Trebatius profanum id propriè dici ait, quod ex religioso vel sacro in hominum usum proprietatè que conversum est. Capta ab hostibus loca, sacra vel religiosa esse designant.

Æneid. 6.

Claudian. De
rapt. Proserp.
Gressus remo-
vete, profani.
Ovid. Met. 7.
Procul hinc
jubeat ire mi-
nistros. Hæc
autem sacra
dicebantur α-
βέηλα; Pli-
nio, Opertanea.

Chrysost. in
Matth. Hom.
83.

And amongst the Grecians ἄγρια are thought to have their name *παρὰ τὸ ἕρχειν τοὺς ἀμύτους*, that is, *because they did restrain or drive the profane from them*. And if the heathen had such care of their idolatrous services that they should not be prophaned, what conscience should Christians make, neither to prophane themselves, nor suffer, so farre as lyeth in them, the supper of the Lord to be prophaned? It was a worthy saying of Chrysostome, *Animam prius tradam meam, quam Dominicum corpus alicui indigno: sanguinemque meum effundi potius patiar, quam sacratissimum illum sanguinem præterquam digno concedam.* Neverthelesse it pertaineth not to every man to debarre the impenitent from the Lords table, but it must be done by them, and in such manner as the Lord hath appointed. For private Christians may not usurp the authority of the church, nor the church execute her authority in undue manner. That is necessary to them that have received commission from God which is unlawfull to them that want authority. In the common-wealth the execution of justice is necessary: but private persons must not challenge the sword of the magistrate. In a corporation no one must take that upon himself which belongeth to the common council. Holy things must not be given to prophane persons: but every one at his pleasure must not deny holy things to unholy persons; but unholy persons must be debarred from holy things in such order as God hath prescribed. It is a thing illegall altogether and unreasonable, that a Christian man
laying

laying open claim to his right in the sacrament, should by the mere discretion of a minister or private Christian be debarred from it. Men would be loth to put their lands, nay their goods and cattels, and shall we think the Lord hath put their interest in the body and bloud of Christ to a private discretion. So should it fare ill with the deserving members of the church, and such as most deserved should least feel the severity of this censure. The precept then of debarriug scandalous offenders bindeth them to whom God hath given this power, and them onely so farre as God hath put it in their power. But God regularly doth not leave that power in the hand of one singular steward, or some few private Christians, to discommon one from the Lords table by publick censure: And therefore the steward may not by any means keep back the fat ones of the earth from his masters table, but warn them fairly of the danger ensuing, as Gratian noteth out of Augustine. And if one or few private Christians cannot debarre the unworthy from the Lords table, it is manifest the ordinance of God is not defiled to them by the presence of the wicked, whom they desire to reform or expell, but cannot, because power is not in their hand to do it lawfully.

For if it be lawfull for the faithfull to hold spirituall communion together in the ordinances of worship, where the wicked and ungodly are tolerated as outward members of that society, and have externall society with them in those ordinances,

Calvin. epist.
178. Ut unus,
aliis in consi-
lium non ad-
hibitis, quie-
quam sentes,
autor esse non
audeo. Adde,
quod nun-
quam utile
putavi, juxta
communican-
di permitti
singulis pasto-
ribus.

Grat. part. 3.
De consecrat.
dist. 2. c. 67.

Argum. 1.

nances, then the presence of scandalous men doth not defile the sacrament to the worthy receiver. The consequence is evident from the reason given to dissuade communion in the sacrament, *sc.* because they that partake are one body. Now if the same communion for substance be in other ordinances, and yet it is lawfull for the faithfull, notwithstanding the wicked be permitted, to hold communion in those ordinances, then it is lawfull to partake at the Lords table though the scandalous and prophane be received: But it is lawfull for the faithfull to hold spirituall communion and fellowship together in the ordinances of worship where the wicked and ungodly are suffered as outward members. For Moses calleth Israel *a chosen people, an holy nation, the peculiar people of God; whom he calleth a stiff-necked people, foolish, and unwise.* The Lord protesteth that *Israel did rebell against him, that they did not understand, but were a most sinfull nation, yea, as Sodom and Gomorrah; and yet he calleth them his children and people: yea, passing Sodom in iniquity, and yet the daughter of his people, and daughter of Sion, his pleasant plant, and a noble vine.* Israel then was the true church of God, and the people true members of that society, and yet many of them not truly sanctified nor true Saints. And if the priests and Levites were set over a people unconverted for the truth of sanctification, though holy by externall covenant, which they for their parts had broken by their iniquities, but on Gods part was undissolved, and the faithfull had spirituall

Deut. 14. 2, 3.

Ex. 19. 10, 11,

12. & 7. 6, 7.

Deut. 32. 5, 6.

Isai. 1. 2, 3, 4,

10.

Lam. 4. 6, 22.

Ezek. 16. 46,

47.

Isa. 5. 1, 2, 3,

5.

Jer. 2. 21.

tuall communion together in the ordinances of worship, when the unwise, foolish, perverse, uncircumcised in heart and life, sinfull and laden with iniquity were admitted as members of the same body or society, then the faithfull are not defiled with the presence of the ungodly at the sacrament, though they that communicate together make one body in externall communion. As the common-wealth of Israel consisting of men uncircumcised in heart, perverse, rebellious, obstinate, as well as faithfull and obedient, was separated into covenant, and so one body in externall communion, and might lawfully have fellowship together in the ordinances; so the faithfull and scandalous received into covenant, and living in society, do partake in the same ordinances without tincture or infection to the better part. As the rebellious and perverse in Judah, so the scandalous in the church are separated into covenant: and though in course of life they be dogs, yet in publick esteem they are not to be reputed dogs, nor used as dogs, till the church have so pronounced of them. Peter calleth the Jews that had crucified Christ, *Brethren*; not according to the flesh, because his kinsmen, but as *children of the prophets and of the covenant*. And if the Apostles might hold spirituall brotherhood with them who were impenitent, perverse, rebellious, yea murderers of the Lord of life; why should it be unlawfull to hold externall communion in the participation of the sacraments with persons scandalous and offensive in course of life?

Acts 2. 29. &
3. 17, 18, 19.
25.

Object. 1.

Robins. A-
gainst Bern.
pag. 101. &
82.

Answ.

Robins. A-
gainst Bern.
pag. 284.

Robins. A-
gainst Bern.
pag. 114, &
231.

Psal. 50. 5.
vers. 16.

Luke 20. 26.
Gen. 4. 26.
Matth. 5. 16.
1. Pet. 2. 12.
Acts 2. 47.

The common-wealth of Israel was a religious politie, and God established them a people unto himself by covenant without exception; and so long as the covenant stood undissolved on Gods part, though broken on theirs by their iniquity, they might hold communion one with another.

Religion ever since the fall of Adam is one and the same for substance, though different in the manner of dispensation: the church from the beginning one and the same in common nature and essence, though different in the manner of government and measure of gifts fitted to severall ages thereof. The mysteries are varied according to the times; but the faith whereby we live is in every age invariable. As God is unchangeable, so is his covenant one and the same, that excepted which was peculiar to the manner of dispensation; the confederates or members of the church by Gods approbation one and the same; and so the common nature and essentiall constitution of all true churches, from the beginning of the world to the end thereof. In all ages of the church the members of the church ought to be saints and holy; must be such as they ought to be in some measure, or they shall not be approved of God. They are *saints, who have made a covenant with God by sacrifice*: But as for the wicked, they have nothing to do with the covenant. The end of the calling of the church is holinesse to the glory of God, at all times: and it is true in one age as well as another, that they who are utterly unanswerable or clean contrary affected to the ends of the true church,

church, which are holinesse and the glory of God, they are not called into covenant or communion with God. If in one age of the church the scriptures ascribe not holinesse to a people for some fews sake, if the rest be unholy and profane, it ascribeth it to them in no age. If in one state of the church unclean persons and things do pollute and unhallow clean persons and things; and a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump; it must hold true in every age in its proportion. And therefore if ignorant, unwise, impenitent, uncircumcised in heart and life, rebellious and obstinate in course and conversation, might be in externall covenant with God, and in that respect a separated, holy and chosen people, with whom the faithfull might hold communion externall in the ordinances of worship, then it is lawfull for Christians to partake in the ordinances of Gods worship though scandalous livers be admitted, with whom in partaking we must have externall communion. For if the scandalous were in covenant then, they may be so now: If communion with the wicked defile now, it defiled then: If the godly might then communicate because they could not cast out the ungodly, the same reason is good at this day: If the faithfull be bound to reprove their delinquent brother, and not suffer sin to rest upon him; the same duty did concern them in former times: If the sacraments be now available and of use, according to the covenant of promise which God hath made to the faithfull and their seed, and none otherwise; as the sacraments are one in their

Lev. 14. 46,
47. & 15. 4,
11, 12.
Hagg. 2. 12,
13, 14.
1. Cor. 5. 6, 7.

Lev. 19. 17.

Gen. 17. 7. &
26. 4.

common nature, so in their use, available onely to the children of the covenant at all times: If it be contrary to the main ends for which the Lord gathereth and preserveth his church upon earth, that wicked and ungodly men should be received into covenant, or permitted to continue in the society of the faithfull, it was unlawfull in the Jewish as well as in the Christian churches. And therefore if the church of the Jews, all this notwithstanding, continued the true church of God, when it was corrupted in doctrine and manners, in officers and ordinances of worship; when the teachers were dumb dogs and blind guides, the prophets prophesied lies, and the priests received gifts, and the people rebellious, adulterous, oppressours, an assembly of rebels; when the priesthood was bought and sold, the temple defiled and made an house of merchandise, the law corrupted with false glosses, and made void with false and sinfull traditions; when errour, heresie, idolatry, oppression, rebellion, stubbornnesse, and all manner of sin was exceeding rife among them: If when all these things were amisse and greatly out of order, they yet continued the sheep of the Lords visible flock, and the Lord was pleased to own them for his people, his flock, his inheritance; if they reteined still the holy law of God and the seal of his covenant, and the prophets and faithfull servants of God held lawfull communion with the church in the ordinances of God: then the covenant of God is not disannulled with his people because ignorant and prophane persons are

*Jer. 5. 31.**Jer. 9. 2, 3.**John 2. 16.**Matth. 15. 7,**8, 9.**Isa. 57. 3. &**1. 4.**Jer. 11. 14.**Isa. 50. 1.**Jer. 3. 11. &**13. 11.*

are tolerated in the assembly, nor the godly defiled because scandalous persons are suffered to communicate.

The word may be preached to heathen and infidels for their conversion. Paul preached the word to the scoffing Athenians and to the blasphemous Jews; and yet had no externall communion with them as with members of the same body.

Object. 2.

Acts 17. 22,

23, 32.

Acts 19. 8, 9.

The word may be preached to them that are without, for their conversion to the faith; to them that be within the church by baptisme and externall profession, for their sound conversion unto God, conversion from particular sinnes, and building forward in grace and holinesse. The word is preached to heathens and infidels, but no communion with them is had thereby, because they are not of the Christian society: But to scandalous persons, first received into the church by baptisme, and not cast out by publick censure, the word is preached as unto members, and not as unto bare hearers; and they are admitted to the prayers of the congregation as well as to the hearing of the word, and that as members in outward covenant. Therefore it is an act of communion in some mens opinions. To use one ordinance and not another, is to make a schisme in the church: And as the preaching of the word, not the bare tender of the word, but the giving of it to dwell and abide with a people, is a note of a true church; so is the hearing of the word an act of communion with the church.

Answer.

Robins. A-

gainst Bern.

pag 79

Argum. 2.

One of the church committeth some notable sinne known to me alone, which (being dealt with by me) he denieth, & without two or three witnesses the church may not proceed against him: I must therefore still communicate with the church, & so with him as a member of it, *Robins. Treat. &c. pag. 437. Eph. 2. 15, 16. Heb. 10. 25. Jude 19. verse Phil. 2. 4. See Zanch. De Eccl. pag. 129.*

If the presence of the wicked doth not defile Gods ordinance to the worthy receiver, then it is lawfull to receive the sacrament in a mixt congregation where scandalous persons are admitted: (For what but pollution or defilement can warrant voluntary Separation and departure from the Lords ordinance?) But the presence of the wicked doth not defile Gods ordinance to the worthy receiver. The simple presence doth not defile: For then the presence of close hypocrites and secret dissemblers, who are in truth unworthy though they appear not so to us, should pollute and defile. Not his knowledge of their unworthinesse: For then Judas his presence had stained the ordinance of God to our Saviour himself, to whom the unworthinesse of Judas was well known: then one man should be bound in conscience to excommunicate another, or himself rather, before the matter be brought to the church; yea, for that which in conscience cannot be brought unto the church. Not the notorious knowledge of their unworthinesse; seeing he hath no power to repell them, nor leave from Christ to withdraw or separate himself from the society. It is the duty of a godly man to withdraw himself from all private familiarity with the wicked, and by no voluntary friendship to ensnare himself with them: But it is one thing to avoid the private society of wicked men; another, for the hatred of the wicked to renounce the publick communion of the church, and so of Christ, who is present with his people. The duties which I ow to a brother in this course I must

must perform; but privately excommunicate him, or separate my self from the congregation for his sake, I must not, because I have no charge from God no pattern from the godly so to do. My communion with the scandalous in that case is not free and voluntary upon mine owne head, but necessary in respect of duty enjoyned of God, through the enforcing law of meeting the Lord in his holy ordinances, and preserving the unitie of the spirit in the bond of peace and love. If therefore the life be corrupt, not from corrupt doctrine, but contrary to the doctrine received, we must do as the prophets and holy servants of God did in those corrupt times, pray, mourn, exhort, reprove, threaten, give good example, but we must not depart or separate from the society where Christ is present by his grace and holy ordinances. If because some members of the body be broken, lame or diseased, the rest that are sound should forsake the unitie of the body, that were to destroy the whole and not to strengthen it, utterly to overthrow, not to seek its recovery: One contagious sinner let alone, not punished, not reclaimed, may infect the whole congregation: and therefore every member must look warily to his own soul that he take no harm by such bad example, and do his endeavour that such incorrigible persons be cast out of the assembly: But the ordinances of grace are not defiled to the worthy receiver by the presence of such as should be censured, nor must he withdraw himself from the holy things of God because such as ought not are suffered

red to partake, so long as Christ is pleased to bear with their manners, and to continue amongst them for their refreshing who in truth of heart draw nigh unto him.

Object. 1.

1. Cor. 5. 11.

Robins. A-
gainst Bern.
pag. 258.

If a brother be a fornicatour, the Apostle exhorteth us *not to eat with him*: Which place doth not onely forbid private and voluntary familiarity but religious also, and that both publick and private. Neither is there any reason, whether we respect the glory of God, or our own safety, or the avoiding of offense in others, or the shaming of the parties, why we should avoid civil cōmunion with any and yet hold religious communion with them. Neither is voluntary society to be opposed to religious: for no society is so voluntary as that which is religious

Answ.

Ephes. 5. 6, 7,

11.

Psal. 41. 9.

All civil and private society or commerce with a delinquent brother is not forbidden, but familiar onely. The Apostle teacheth not Christians to be uncivil, but to abstain from familiarity with such, that they might be ashamed. For *to eat bread together* is a token of love and friendship in phrase of scripture: not to partake of, or be shut from the table, a signe of familiaritie broken off. But there is not the same reason of breaking off private familiarity with an offender, and separating from the Lords ordinances if he be admitted, whether respect be had to the glory of God, our owne safety, the avoiding of offense, or the good of the party fallen. For in coming to Gods ordinance we have communion with Christ principally, who hath called us thither, is there present by his grace and Spirit to blesse his ordinance; and with the faith-

faithfull, who are there met together at Gods commandment, in the name and by the authority of Jesus Christ: With the wicked we have no communion, unlesse it be externall and by accident, because they are not or cannot be cast out. Internall and essentiall communion we have with Christ and the faithfull onely, externall with the wicked. Our communion with Christ and his faithfull people is not free and voluntary, but necessary; enjoyned by God, not left to our will or pleasure: Our communion with the wicked in the ordinances is unwilling on our part, suffered not affected, if we knew how to hinder it lawfully. God requireth our attendance upon him in his holy ordinances, and to joyn with his voluntaries assembled, where he is present in the midst among them: if we cannot appear before him, as duty bindeth, but we must have outward communion with the wicked, which should be expelled, but cannot be kept back by us, in this case our communion with God is free and voluntary, but our communion with the wicked is suffered onely, or held in respect of the will and commandment of God, who requireth that service at our hands. And if civil commerce with the wicked be not unlawfull when it is necessary, why should externall communion in matters of religion defile, when it cannot be avoyded but the worship of the most High must be neglected? God is not dishonoured on our part when we obey his commandments: the godly cannot justly be and not given; seeing the thing is in it self good, and in its kind commanded by God, and in that particular by men in authoritie, and directly tending to mine edification,

Robins. Treat. pag. 20.

Our Saviour commandeth us to let the Pharisees alone, Matth. 15. 16. and yet to heare them, and do as they say, while they teach the truth Matth. 23. 1, 2. *Rainold, Conf. with Hart, ch. 7. div. 4.*

It is an offense taken

Ec

offended

offended with that communion which God hath established, and ratifieth with his own speciall presence : there is no danger in spirituall communion with Christ and his faithfull people, if we come to the ordinances in affiance, fear, humbleness of mind, &c. as we ought : And as for the wicked, they can take no encouragement, if according to our place and office we exhort, admonish, rebuke and tell them plainly of the danger of their sin ; or if any be hardned thereby, his bloud shall be upon his own head. We have received commandment from God to exhort, admonish, rebuke, watch over one another according to our place and calling : but to excommunicate our selves because such as should be cut off are suffered, or to withdraw our selves from the ordinances and to depart from Christ because such as hate to be reformed take the covenant into their mouthes, or to usurp power to censure and excommunicate, which God hath not put into our hands ; these things are neither commanded nor allowed of God. The wicked usurp in that they intrude unto the Lords table : and the faithfull usurp, if without authoritie they take upon them to expell the wicked, or depart themselves : And if we search the scripture, and move onely as the Lord is pleased to go before us, we shall not find that a few private Christians have authority in this case to do either. And hence appeareth an apparent difference betwixt externall communion with wicked men in the exercises of religion, and private familiaritie : For familiarity is merely arbitrary,
not

not enjoined but forbidden; affected, not admitted onely in case of necessity or necessary attendance; nor suffered onely that we might have fellowship with Christ and his Saints in his ordinances of worship; nor by accident onely, as we cannot expell them, or withdraw our selves by the Lords leave and approbation. Draw this argument then into form, and it runneth thus; It is not lawfull to have private, needlesse, arbitrary familiarity with ungodly men, who are called brethren: therefore it is not lawfull to repair to the ordinances of grace when the Lord calleth, nor there to have communion with Christ and his faithfull people, because the wicked are permitted to be present, when yet we have neither power to repell them, nor leave of Christ to depart our selves. How loose this consequence is who doth not see?

A little leaven leaveneth the vvhole lump: One scandalous sinner not reclaimed or cast out polluteth the whole congregation: And men must not be blamed if they dare not dip in their meal, lest they be sowed with their leaven.

The comparison of the leaven used by the Apostle is to be understood in likenesse of nature, not in their equality of effecting: For leaven sowreth naturally, and cannot but sowre the meal: the godly may be hurt by the wicked, but it is not necessary. Therefore every member must look warily to himself, and do his endeavour to reclaim other, or that he may be cast out, if notorious and incorrigible, but not withdraw himself

Ec 2

from

Object. 2.

1. Cor. 5. 6.

Robins. Against Bern.
pag. 16.

Answ.

Gal. 5. 9.

*Matth. 13. 33.**Matth. 16. 6,
12.*

If the church
see not that to
be sin which I
see to be a sin,
I having in-
formed the
church there-
of according
to my place, I
have dischar-
ged my duty,
and the sinne
lieth upon the
church, if it be
a sin, and not
upon me,
*Robins. Trea-
tis. Of the
lawf. &c.
The printers
to the Christi-
an Readers.*

from the ordinances of grace. The doctrine of the Gospel is compared to leaven in respect of its efficacy: but all that heare it are not seasoned by it, though it be a good means of seasoning. The corrupt doctrine of the Pharisees is compared to old leaven: but every one that heard it was not necessarily tainted with it. It is true, if the whole church shall bear with scandalous, notorious offenders, and do not their endeavour to bring them to repentance, or to have them cast out, they are polluted and stained by their remissenesse & indulgence: and this is that which the Apostle preffeth upon the Corinthians, that they should give all diligence to clear themselves, and prevent the danger which might come by their negligence. But if the church be remisse or slack, the private men who mourn for what they cannot amend, and labour conscionably to discharge their duties, may not separate from the communion or withdraw themselves from the Lords table. For the Apostle, who blameth the Corinthians because they suffered the incestuous person, doth never blame the faithfull for communicating with him before he was cut off, nor intimate unto them, that unlesse he did amend they must absent themselves from their assemblies and holy exercises, or depart away being come together. They that have authority to debarre men from the sacrament, sin, if wittingly or negligently they allow such to approach as worthy guests to the Lords table who are known unto them notoriously to be unworthy: but if authoritie be wanting, if we have done the office of private

private Christians, or publick ministers, to communicate with the wicked outwardly in the worship of God is none offense. And thus the minister may reach the sacrament to an unworthy communicant, and yet be innocent. For he doth not so much give it him, as suffer his communion, because he hath not power or authority to put him back: He reacheth him the signes, as that which he cannot withhold, because he is held in by the most prevailing power, without which he cannot be debarred. In this case the minister is neither actour nor consenter in his admission, because he doth it not in his own name, but according to the order established by God, who will not have any member of the congregation publickly denied his interest and right to the holy things of God by the knowledge will and pleasure of one singular minister. If a minister know a man to be unworthy, he must yet receive him, because he cannot manifest it to the church: And for the same reason, if his unworthinesse be notorious, if it be not so judged by them that have authority, he must administer the sacramentall signes unto him, not as unto one worthy or unworthy, but as unto one as yet undivided from them.

In answer to the examples of Christ and his Apostles; who as they abstained from corruptions in the Jewish church, so were they quite separated from all false churches, as the Samaritanes and others, *Ainsworth, Confid. exam. pag. 8.*

A man is not onely bound in his place to do his best for the reclaiming of his brother, but to see his place be such as wherein he may orderly dis-

Ec 3

charge

I partake not in the sins of any, how great or manifest soever the sins be, or how near unto me soever the persons be, except the same sins either be committed or remain unreformed by my fault. Otherwise Christ our Lord had been inwrapped in the guilt of a world of sins in the Jewish church, with which church he communicated in Gods ordinances, living and dying a member thereof, *Robins. Treat. pag. 18.*

Object. 3.

*Robins. A-
gainst Bern.
pag. 246.*

Idem, pag. 16.

Answ.

*1. Sam. 3. 12,
15, 16, 17, 18,
19, 20.*

*Our Saviour
provided be-
forehand, that
we should not
refuse good
doctrine be-
cause it was
delivered by
wicked men,
Aug. Epi. 165.
& Tract. in
Joan. 46. &
De doctr.
Christ. l. 4.
cap. 27.*

charge the duties of admonition: otherwise both his practice and place are unlawfull. This is not sufficient, that we labour by the best means to have manifest evils amended, except our places be such, and we in such churches, as wherein we may use the ordinary means Christ hath left for the amendment of things: otherwise our places and standings themselves are unwarrantable and must be forsaken.

If all places and standings be unwarrantable wherein we may not use the ordinary means God hath left for the amendment of things, then all places are unlawfull, wherein the greatest part of the church at least do not conscionably discharge their duties, and of them which have greatest authority: Then the Levites might not abide in their standings when the priests neglected their office; nor the prophets when the priests and Levites had corrupted their wayes: Then the people might not sacrifice nor receive spirituall blessings by their hands when Eli's sons had notoriously corrupted their wayes, nor the faithfull remain in society when the priest and people both had corrupted the law, worship, offices, and manners. To speak no more of abuses; if this rule hold, no place or standing in the church is lawfull, wherein three or more private persons, who can make Peters confession of faith, have not power of the keyes to receive into and shut out of the church, to censure and determine authoritatively. And so it may well be questioned (to say no more) whether ever there was any lawfull standing in a constituted church:

church: Since the death of the Apostles, if they be put unto it, according to this position, they must confesse there was never any. And considering the ignorance, infirmities, diversities of opinions that be amongst the godly, passions, distempers and corruptions, how is it possible but that the church must fall into as many schismes almost as there be men, if each man must renounce others standing as unlawfull, wherein he conceiteth he is restrained of some power or hindred of some ordinary means which Christ hath left for the amendment of things.

The followers of Mr Robinson complaining of some foure or five who left their society, write thus; Which proceeding of theirs if it were approved of and followed, no church could long continue toge-

ther in peace: For what these foure or five men have done, that may any other man do, so that if any man do conceive any of his brethren to walk in any such sin which he judgeth doth deserve excommunication, if the church will not thereunto consent, he may rent himself from the same, *Robins. Treat. Of the lawfulnessse &c. The printers to the Christian readers.*

Object. 4.

Robins. Against Bern. pag. 248.

No church in the world now hath that absolute promise of the Lords visible presence which the church then had till the coming of Christ. It was simply necessary, that Messiah should be born in the true church, wherein he might have communion and fulfill the law. The Lord did afford the Jews, even in their deepest apostasie, some or other visible signes of his presence, and those extraordinary when ordinary failed; thereby still declaring himself to remember his promise. There was that onely visible church upon the face of the earth, tyed to one temple, altar, sacrifice, priesthood, in one place; and no man could absolutely separate from that church but he must separate from the visible presence and from all solemn worship

Idem. pag. 250

worship of God. Moreover, the Jewish church had not that distinct ecclesiasticall ordinance of excommunication which we now have; but that the obstinate or presumptuous offender was by bodily death to be cut off from the Lords people; the same persons, namely the whole nation, being both church and common-wealth according to that speciall dispensation.

Ans.

These observations rightly applyed do manifestly overthrow what hath been and is by others objected against communion with us in the worship of God. For if it was absolutely necessary that the Messias should be born in the true church, wherein he might have communion, then a church corrupted in officers and offices, doctrine, worship and manners, may be a true church, wherewith the faithfull may hold communion without sin; or at least the faithfull may lie hid in such a corrupt society, and hold communion with them in the exercises of religion without sin. And if the Jews had not power to cast out an offender, the material part of that church was not visible Saints, whom God was pleased to take into covenant, but the whole body of the Jewish nation, ignorant, impenitent, prophane, obstinate, even all that were not cut off by bodily death; the sacraments must not be dispensed according to the promise made to the faithfull and their seed, but promiscuously to all that came of the loins of Jacob according to the flesh; the faithfull might and ought to have communion, as one body, with the wicked and prophane, who remain in unbelief, and both
revile

revile and persecute the truth ; Then a company of impenitent sinners might and did remain the true church , being to the judgement of men irrecoverable, then such as are altogether averse to the end of their holy calling , may be received into covenant ; and though the society be never so much sowed with the unclean conversation of the ungodly , yet the faithfull may dip in their meal, and live in that society without fear of pollution, dishonour to God , encouragement to the wicked, or scandal to the brethren. And what then is become of the heaps of quotations whereby they would prove that the members of the church must be *holy, visible saints, a people converted, in covenant, separated to the Lord, and that the church is onely true whiles it continueth such, and false when it degenerateth from this disposition?* and of their confident arguing, *That if it were the will of God that persons notoriously wicked should be admitted into the church, then should he directly crosse himself and his own ends, and should receive into the visible covenant of grace such as were out of the visible state of grace, and should plant such in his church for the glory of his name as served for none other use then to cause his name to be blasphemed?* That all true churches, from the beginning to the end of the world, are one in nature and essentiall constitution , and the first the rule of the rest : and if it was not lawfull for the godly to contract with the wicked in the civil covenant of marriage, how much more in the religious covenant of the church? That God gave unto Abraham and to his family the covenant of circumcision, which the

Apostle calleth the seal of the righteousness of faith. And to affirm that the Lord would seal up with the visible seal of the righteousness of faith any visible unrighteous and faithlesse person, were a bold challenge of the most High for the profanation of his own ordinances? These and many the like are broken to pieces by this observation, That the whole nation of the Jews, sinfull, laden with iniquity, corruptours, revolvers in course of life, were Gods separated people by covenant, and might lay claim unto and could not be debarred from the visible seals of the righteousness of faith, though in themselves faithlesse and unrighteous. And if it was no pollution to the Jews, to suffer notorious wicked ones amongst them; so they discharged such other duties as were enjoyned them by the Lord, because they had not power to cast them out; it is no pollution for private and particular Christians, who have not the power of excommunication in their hand given unto them by Christ, to suffer such as be ignorant and scandalous to communicate in the ordinances of grace with them, if they perform all other duties which God requireth at their hands. Moreover, if the Jews had not power to cast out a wicked person, they had power to cut off the presumptuous; and the neglect of the one is as inexcusable as of the other: And so the whole controversie turneth upon this one hinge, Whether one or two or some few private Christians have power to cast out and excommunicate whole societies & churches for some remissenesse or abuse in bearing with or admitting scandalous offenders in the

the societies, so long as the doctrine of grace is purely taught, the sacraments rightly administred for substance, Christ is pleased to tolerate and bear with their manners, continueth the visible signes of his presence among them, and is present by speciall grace to blesse his ordinances to the worthy receiver. A few words one would think might suffice in this matter: but seeing the strength of the cause lieth therein, in the chapters following it shall be handled more at large.

In the church of Corinth there were divisions, sects, emulations, contentions, and quarrels, and going to law one with another for every trifle, and that under the infidels; Pauls name and credit was despitefully called in question there, whom they should have honoured as a father; the resurrection of the dead (which is the life of Christianity) was denied; that wickednesse was winked at there which is execrable to the very heathen; the Lords supper was horribly profaned, in that some came to it drunken; there was fornication and such like sins not repented of; things indifferent were used with manifest offense, and idolatry committed in eating at the tables of idoles meats sacrificed to devils: Notwithstanding all which abuses that societie is called and was *the church of God*, and the faithfull did and might communicate with others without pollution. The Galatians had so farre adulterated the Gospel of Christ that the Apostle telleth them they were removed to another Gospel, pronounceth that they were bewitched, and if they still persisted to joyn circumcision and the works

Argum. 3.

1. Cor. 3. 3.

1. Cor. 6. 1, 2.

2. Cor. 10. 10.

1. Cor. 15. 12.

1. Cor. 5. 1.

1. Cor. 11. 19.

20.

2. Cor. 11. 20.

21.

1. Cor. 1. 2, 4.

9. & 12.

Gal. 1. 6. & 3. 1.

& 5. 4.

Gal. 1. 2.

Revel. 1. 4.

Revel. 2. 14, 15

Revel. 2. 20.

Revel. 3. 1, 2.

Revel. 3. 20, 21

E 4.

Col. 2. 11, 16,

18.

3. John 9, 10.

Jam. 2. 1, 2. E

3. 1, 2.

E 4. 1, 2, 3.

Jude 12, 13.

of the law with Christ, they were fallen from grace, and Christ could not profit them : and yet they are called *churches of Galatia*. Ephesus was extremely decayed in her first love ; she was not onely cooled a little, but had left it : In Pergamus there were some that held the doctrine of Balaam, and of the Nicolaitanes : In Thyatira the woman Jezebel was suffered to teach and seduce the servants of Christ : Of Sardis the holy Ghost saith, *she had a name to live, but was dead ; her works were not perfect before God ; there were but a few there who had not defiled their garments* : Of Laodicea it is recorded that she was neither hot nor cold, and then it is not hard to conceive how she was overgrown with disorders ; and yet Christ was present with her by his grace, and the faithfull are exhorted to repent, or beware of her sinne, and not to forsake her society. Of the abuses in the church of Rome something hath been noted before : Of corruptions and disorders in other churches the scriptures give plentiful testimony : But you shall never find that the faithfull are warned to separate from the worship of God in these assemblies, but to keep themselves pure and undefiled, and labour the reformation of others by all means lawfull. In the primitive church after the apostles, the discipline of the church was in some cases very severe, partly to prevent the abuse of Gods ordinances, partly to maintein the dignitie and authority of the censures : neverthelesse the godly were compelled to tolerate many disorders, which they could not redresse, not in doctrine and worship, but in man-

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ners and conversation. For as soon as Christians began a little to breathe from the fear of bloody persecution, they fell into dissolute idleness, and began to nourish debate, strife, hatred, emulation, pride, &c. to heap sinne upon sinne, as might be proved at large by the complaints of the Fathers made of the finnes of the times, in all sorts, ministers and people, men and women. But it was and ever hath been the judgement of them who did so grievously complain of the finnes of their times, that the godly did not communicate with others in their finnes although they did continue with them in the communion of the sacraments.

Aug. b. Hist. lib. 8. cap. 1. Cyp. De laps. 5. 4. Quia traditam nobis Divinitus disciplinam pax longa corrumperat, jacentem fidem & penè dixerim dormientem censura celestis erexit. Cyp. De laps. studebant augendo patrimonio singu-

li, &c. *Cyp. Epist. 51. ad Maxim. Etsi videntur in Ecclesia esse zizania, non tamen impediri dederat fides aut charitas nostra, ut quoniam zizania esse in Ecclesia cernimus, ipsi de Ecclesia recedamus. And Epist. 52. Nobis autem secundum fidem nostram & Divinæ prædicationis datam formam competit ratio veritatis, unumquemque in peccato suo ipsum teneri, nec posse alterum pro altero reum fieri, cum Dominus præmonet & dicat, Justitia iusti super eum erit, et scelus scelerati super eum erit. Aug. lib. 2. Contr. Crescon. Gram. cap. 32. Non est Ecclesia deserenda, tanquam frumenta propter paleam vel zizania, sicut nec domus magna propter vasa inhonorata. & cap. 37. August. Contr. Donatist. cap. 20. Toleramus quæ nolumus, ut perveniamus quod volumus, utentes cautela præcepti Domini, &c. August. lib. De fide & oper. Perniciosa est audacia, stultaque præsumptio, se ab Ecclesia separare ob exempla quorundam male moratorum, &c. And lib. 3. Contr. Par. cap. 2. Si contagio peccandi multitudinem invalerit, non est illa excommunicanda, sed Dei correctio expectari debet. Nam separationis consilia sunt inania, perniciosa, sacrilega, impia, superba, plus perturbant infirmos bonos quam corrigunt animosos malos. See *Whitak. De Eccl. qu. 1. cap. 10, 11. See August. Brevicul. Collat. And Aug. lib. 3. Cont. sit. Parmen. cap. 1. AUFERE, inquit, MALUM EX VOBIS; ut si forte non possent auferre malos à congregatione sua auferendo, malum ex seipsis, id est, non cum ipsis peccando, nec iis ad peccandum consensiendo aut favendo, integerrimi inter eos & incorruptissimi ver-**

If a church depart from the Lord by any transgression, and therein remain irrepentant after due conviction, and will not be reclaimed, it manife-

Object. 1.

steth unto us, that God also hath left it, and that as the church by her sinne hath separated from and broken covenant with God, so God by leaving her in hardnesse of heart without repentance, hath on his part broken and dissolved the covenant also. The Lord Jesus threatneth the churches for leaving their first love and for their lukewarmnesse, that he will come against them speedily, and remove their candlestick, that is, dischurch them, except they repent, and spue them as lothsome out of his mouth.

Ans.

Rom. 16. 17.

1. Cor. 5. 1, 4,

5.

1. Thess. 5. 14.

2. Thess. 3. 6.

1. Tim. 6. 5.

Rev. 2. 14, 16,

20.

It is true, the Apostles mention corruptions in the churches with utter dislike, severe reproof, and strait charge of reformation: and the Lord Jesus threatneth the churches for lukewarmnesse and leaving their first love: But neither Christ nor his Apostles did ever blame the faithfull for holding communion in those churches in the ordinances of worship, or give them charge to depart if disorders and abuses were not forthwith corrected and amended. Not to enquire what is due conviction, or when a church is to be deemed obstinately impenitent, it is most untrue, that the toleration of disorders or maintenance of corruptions of some kind by some, yea by many in the church, is to us a manifest token that God hath left it. The history of the church from the very first plantation thereof unto this very day doth evidence, that many and foul abuses, disorders and corruptions have continued in the churches of God; when yet the Lord did not utterly take from them all tokens of his visible presence. This is confessed of the church
of

of the Jews : And if they continued the church of God when they had broken covenant for their part, so long as the Lord continued the signes of his visible presence among them, how dare any man think or say that God hath utterly left or forsaken that people amongst whom he dwelleth plentifully by the means of grace, and unto whom he imparteth the graces of his Spirit, though for their sinnes they deserve to be cast off? The Lord is God and not man, therefore the sonnes of Jacob are not confounded. The Jews at first were chosen to be the people of God, not for their righteousness, but of the rich grace and mercy of God: They continue to be his church, not for their righteousness, but according to his free and gracious promise: And so long as Christ doth of his mere grace and love bear with the manners of his church, and giveth her not a bill of divorce, it is not for men to say or judge that he hath utterly left and forsaken her. And seeing the faithfull must follow Christ, dwell with Christ and abide with him, so long as Christ doth dwell in the assembly by his presence and plentiful means of grace it is not lawfull for them voluntarily to depart and break off communion.

CHAP. XI.

Of holding communion with that assembly in the worship of God, where we cannot perform all duties mentioned Matth. 18. 15, 16, 17.

Object. 1.

VHosoever neglecteth Christs rule in proceeding with his minister or others of the church, both partaketh in their sin, and sinneth against Christs command, Matth. 18. If he be ignorant of Christs rule and order, yet he sinneth: but if he know it, and do it not, then his sin remaineth. Now the rule prescribed by Christ is, That one brother offended should warn any member of the same church whereof he is a member, if he offend him, yea though it be his minister: And if he reform not, he must proceed to warn him more solemnly, taking two or three with him, doing it in the name of Christ: If this admonition take not effect for reformation, he must tell the church: If the church then will not do their duty, he must clear himself, protesting against their neglect therein, Hos. 2. 17.

Answ.

The brief and plain meaning of this objection is, That every Christian is bound to perform all those offices mentioned to every delinquent brother in society or communion; and that it is not lawfull to abide in society or communion where a man cannot perform all those duties without defiling or undoing himself. And therein is implied, that seeing the Jews had no such order for excommuni-

communication established amongst them, therefore they might hold communion notwithstanding the corruptions that were found amongst them. To trie the strength of this argument, let it be granted, that our Saviour speaketh not of private managing of civil affairs and private injuries, whereby we might recover what we lost by the injurie of our brother, (for that is an indulgence or benefit, no commandment of rule and duty; yea sometimes it is a fault not to suffer wrong) but of church-admonitions and censures, and that order which he hath set for the winning or punishment of offenders. But then by a *delinquent brother* we must not understand onely one of the same particular society or fellowship, but any one, of what countrey or condition soever, with whom we have religious fellowship: *If thy brother*, If any man that is called a brother; *thy brother*, that is, a Christian. For our Lord hath appointed no such course to be taken with them that are out of the church. Suppose Christians of distinct societies living remote one from another do trespasse one against the other, is not the innocent party bound to hold the course here prescribed with the delinquent brother? The rule of our Saviour is not, That one brother offended should admonish any member of the same church whereof he is a member (that is an addition which the text will not acknowledge) but, *If thy brother trespasse against thee*. Christ speaketh here unto his Apostles, but not unto them simply as Apostles, but as disciples,

1. Cor. 6. 1,7.

Theophylact.
ad Matth. 18.
Chrysost. in
Matth. Hom.
62.
Jansen. Harm.
Evangel. cap.
72.

John 6. 59, 60.
Talmidim

lingua Hebraea iidem sunt qui lingua Graeca ποιηται, auditores.

G g

Christians,

Christians, and followers of Christ; because the things here commanded are common to all Christians, and not peculiar to the Apostolicall function. It is further to be enquired, in what cases we are to hold the course prescribed. *If thy brother sin against thee.* This cannot be meant of secret offenses known unto one onely: For wisdom and piety both forbid us to bring into light the private finnes and offenses of brethren, whereof they cannot be convinced: for this is to be a revealer rather than a healer of our brothers infirmities. If I know an offense committed by another whereof I can make no proof, in love I must admonish him privately, mourn and pray for him, and so leave him to the Lord, to whom the judgement of secret things doth belong. This is acknowledged by them who interpret this text of finnes secretly committed against God. In those finnes which are so hid and secret that he who should deny them can be convinced with no witnesses, there is none or very little place left to this saying of Christ. Some would have it, that Christ speaketh of secret offenses against God; because the word is most properly used for *sinne*, and another for *wrong* and *injury*: but this will bear no weight. For the word is generall, but the phrase, *To sinne against thee*, is spoken of wrongs and injuries against men. As, *Let not the King sinne against David his servant*: that is, Do not evil unto him; Plot not evil or death against him: *because he hath not sinned against thee*: that is, He hath hurt thee in nothing; He hath offended thee in no matter.

Did

Gratian. De-
cret. part. 2.
c. 2. qu. 1. c. 1,
2, 3, 4, 19.

Beza, Annot.
in Matth. 18.
16.

Matth. 3. 6.
& 9. 2. & 12.
31. & 16. 28.
Robins. A-
gainst Bern.
pag. 18c.

1. Sam. 19. 4.
Sept. Μη ἀ-
μαρτάνῃς τῷ
τῷ δαυιδ.

Did I not say unto you, Sinne not against the lad? that is, Hurt him not; or, Kill him not: for so Reuben spake unto his brethren when they thought of killing Joseph. When any one hath sinned against his neighbour; that is, hath hurt or offended him by any means. What have I sinned against thee or against thy servants? that is, Wherein have I done wrong or injurie to thee? And so in this passage, If thy brother sin against thee: that is, If he hurt or wrong thee; not, If thou be privie to his sin. This is plain, if it be compared with that of Luke, If thy brother sinne against thee seven times a day: and the question of Peter, If my brother sin against me, how oft must I forgive him? till seven times? and our Saviours answer, I say not unto thee, Till seven times; but, Vntill seventy times seven times. Neither is our brother to be accused for every light fault or trespasse against us, but for that which is scelus or affine sceleri, or for that which is an argument (unlesse the rest of his life be known and approved) of a prophane man, a contemner of God and his neighbour. There are some faults of men as it were naturall, and of no great moment: there it is not alwayes necessary that complaints should be doubled. Some faults are to be wrapped up in silence, and covered with the cloke of charity. Not all sinnes are meant, but such as are stumbling-blocks to mens consciences, and such as are manifest to be sinnes, and to be committed, in case they should be denied. But though sins against God be not expressly intended in this place, by analogie they must be understood; be-

Gen. 42. 22.
Sept. Mā aḏ-
kūnū 71 tō mā-
šūpūv. Arab.
Erpen. Ne pec-
catis.
Gen. 37. 21,
22.
1. Kings 8. 31.
Sept. Av a-
māpū 71 vāḡ-
tū mānūv.
Jer. 37. 18.
Sept. Tī nḡ-
kūnū 71;
Luke. 17. 3, 4.

Matth. 18. 21.
Rivet. Ortho-
dox. tract. 1.
qu. 8. pag. 126.

Eccle. 7. 20, 21,
22.

Pol. Lyscr.
Harm. Evang.
cap. 92.
Beza, De Pres-
byt. pag. 46.

Gal. 6. 1.
Lev. 19. 17.

*Beſarm. De
verbo Dei, l. 3,
cap. 5.*

cause the principall end why our brother offending is to be admonished, and complained of if he do not repent, is the salvation of his soul, which hath place in sinnes against God no lesse then in offenses against our selves. But herein Christian moderation requireth, that many ignorances, errors, infirmities, and weakneses of quotidian incurſion, which overtake the godly, be covered in love, and not made the matter of complaint and censure. Some errors and frailties be of that nature, that if by admonition of love I cannot cure them, I must cover them in love, yea though the party, out of a false perswasion that he is in the truth when he doth erre, should be obstinate. It must also be remembred, that this duty first by one, then by more, and lastly by the church upon complaint made, is affirmative, and bindeth onely when occasion, season and opportunity is offered, or a Christian in speciall is called thereunto. An oath is one branch of Gods worship; but he dishonoureth not God who never sweareth, if he be never lawfully called thereunto: and the like may be said of the duty of admonition by way of censure. It is the office of a chirurgian to launch and cut when need requireth: but it is no impeachment to his skill or office, if he was never enforced to that service. If the occasion of admonition be just, a Christian must further wait for the season, when it may be fit to administer it best, and in what manner. For admonition must be used as physick, which is not like to work kindly unlesse the patient be in right temper to receive it. And for complaint to the church,

church, if private admonition first by one then by more prevail not, a Christian is not ordinarily bound unto it when he cannot perform it or do it with good successe. If the Jews had not the distinct ordinance of ecclesiasticall excommunication, yet the Lord took order then as well as now that no sinne should be suffered unreformed, no obstinate sinner uncut off. And therefore if a man committed a sinne, whether of ignorance or otherwise, for which he was not to die without pardon, he was to be told and admonished of his offense, and to manifest his repentance: But the obstinate and presumptuous were to be cut off. So that the godly amongst the Jews were first to admonish the transgressor, and if he did not repent, then to proceed further, according to the Lords ordinance. But now suppose the guides temporall or ecclesiasticall, to whom the matter must be brought, be so corrupt that they would countenance the offender, punish the complainant, establish the disorder rather then redresse or amend it, in this case what should the innocent do? must he complain to his undoing, or leave his standing in the church as unlawfull, because he cannot do the duties which God calleth for at his hands? The shepherds of the church of the Jews were many times blind, wicked, vain persons, such as Christ calleth thieves, robbers, hirelings. The scribes and Pharisees, what were they but blind guides, corrupt teachers, who caused the people to erre: If the disciples or faithfull had sought to them for reformation of abuses, or redresse of offenses, what could have

Robins. Treat.
pag. 189.

Leu. 19. 17.
Deut. 17. 12.
Numb. 15. 30,
32, 34, 36.

Isa. 57. 2.
Ezek. 34. 3.
Zech. 11. 17.
John 10. 10,
21.
Matth. 15. 5.
& 16. 6. & 26.
65.

1. Cor. 3. 10.

2. Cor. 11. 13.
Gal. 1. 6.Apoc. 2. 20. &
3. 15. & 2. 14.
& 3. 1.

1. Cor. 1. 11.

1. Cor. 5. 1, 2.

been expected? If by *the church* we understand either the guides and governours, or the whole society and faithfull: we know the guides of the church are many times remisse, idle, partiall, corrupt. The Corinthian Pastours built hay and stubble upon the foundation which Paul had laid: amongst them were false Apostles, deceitfull workers, who did transform themselves into the Apostles of Christ. In Galatia the Pastours troubled the church with corrupt doctrine. The Angels of Thyatira, Laodicea, Pergamus and Sardis are all reprehended. What then must the faithfull do? leave their standings, and depart from the ordinances of grace, whilest God is pleased to dwell amongst them? or neglect the duty which God calleth them unto, and so partake in other mens sin? The community or congregation it self is oft divided, remisse; the greatest part many times the worst, so that the best cannot be heard amongst them, truth cannot take place. In Corinth there were so many sects and divisions that the house of Chloe was constrained to complain of them to the Apostle: most of them were puffed up in the case of the incestuous man, that it had been in vain for the better sort to seek his casting out if the Apostle had not sharply admonished them of their duty: And their disorder in coming to the Lords supper was generall, so that the better sort might bewail but could not redresse it. In the primitive church there was such contention oftentimes about the choise and election of ministers, the Pastours divided from the people,

people, and the people one from another, to the committing of many outrages, that if the godly must not hold any place in the church but where they could perform all offices enjoined in the text of scripture before alledged, they must welnigh go out of the world. In this and such cases then what should the faithfull do? Tell the church they cannot; for that is divided, and it may be the greatest part holdeth the worst cause: Depart they must not, for the Lord doth not go before them; and if they depart without him, they depart from the Lord himself. What remaineth then, but that with mercifull affection they dislike, reprove, and correct as much as in them lieth what they find to be amisse; what they cannot amend, that they should patiently endure and suffer, and in loving sort bewail and lament, till God do either correct and amend it, or make way for their enlargement, as they may see the Lord to go before them. But in the mean space it will be said they do not their duty in telling the church: Nay rather, the Lord requireth not that particular duty at that time, because they have no opportunity or means to do it. The rule prescribed concerneth visible and particular churches, as a solemn ordinance of Christ, for the humbling and saving of an obstinate sinner: but a Christian may be a true member of a visible church when he is hindred and cannot do the thing that is there prescribed. For our Saviour speaketh of a brother that doth justly, truly, and according to equity reprehend, admonish, or complain; and of them who being
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set in office do rightly and lawfully perform the office whereunto they are appointed of God; of the church who doeth what becometh her, keepeth herself within the bounds prescribed of God, and rightly executeth what is committed to her trust. But in the true church of God, which Christ is pleased to grace with the visible tokens of his presence, all things may fall out clean contrary; that such as be in office do not truly discharge their office, that the church doth not keep herself to the rule, nor fulfill the trust committed unto her. In the Law they that were thought unclean were to be restrained from the sacrifices, the eating of the passeover, entrance into the temple. And not onely legall pollutions, but sinnes of all kinds, whether by error or ignorance of the law or fact, or voluntarily committed, were to be expiated according to the prescript of the law, which doth necessarily presuppose uncleanness, and that accompanied separation from the altar, and the participation of the holy things. The legall ceremonies, which were outward and carnall, did represent spirituall and internall to the minds of the faithfull, as the uncleanness of the body did the inward filth of the soul. The wicked are oftentimes upbraided, that they durst come into the presence of God. The scriptures testifie, that the Lord accepteth the sacrifices of righteousness, of a broken and contrite heart; that he is not pleased with the sacrifices of wicked men, whose hands are full of blood: And the Lord often giveth commandment, that he which shall do

Lev. 7. 20. &

22. 2, 3.

Num. 19. 13,

20.

2. Chron. 23. 19

Lev. 4. 2, 13,

22, 27. & 5.

4, 17.

Num. 15. 22,

23, 24.

Psal. 50. 13,

14, 15, 16.

Isa. 1. 15, 21,

22, 23.

Psal. 51. 18,

19.

Hos. 6. 6.

Amos 5. 22.

Gen. 17. 14.

Num. 15. 30.

& 19. 13.

do so or so, or shall not do this or that, shall be cut off from his people. All which, whether they conclude the use of excommunication amongst the Jews, let the learned judge. But howsoever, this is most certain; Many things were required which the wicked altogether neglected, the godly could not redresse, nor complain of to them that should; or if they did, no regard was had thereunto, no reformation followed: and yet the godly left not their standings, as unlawfull; nor the society, as left and forsaken of God because they had broken covenant with him; nor the ordinances of God, as if externall communion with the wicked as one body had polluted and defiled them. Put case a brother offended make a complaint to the church of some private injury or wrong received by one of the same or another society, and the church to whom the complaint is brought deal remissely, either through ignorance, partiality, carelesse-
ness, or the like; must the innocent party stand to the decision of the church, although they do not see right exactly restored, and the delinquent brought to repentance? or must he protest against their neglect, and depart from the society as not to be communicated with, because they tolerate a wicked and ungodly person among them? If the first, then simply to be present at the worship of God where wicked men are tolerated is not to partake in their sin: If the latter, then the accuser may be judge in his own cause, and not onely hold him an heathen whom the church esteemeth holy and honest, but hold the church it self heathen,

Hh

then, because they account him not so blameworthy whom he accuseth : then which what is more contrary to the rule of our Saviour ? And so if true examination be made, they that leave our societies because they cannot observe the rule prescribed by Christ, do of all others most neglect it in their separation ; because they challenge that authority which Christ never gave them, and wait not upon him to go before them.

Object. 2. If iniquity be committed in the church, and complaint and proof accordingly made, and the church will not reform or reject the party offending, but will on the contrary maintein presumptuously and abett such impiety, then by abetting the party and his sin she maketh it her own by imputation, and enwrappeth herself in the same guilt with the sinner ; and remaining irreformable, either by such members of the same church as are faithfull (if there be any) or by other sister-churche, wipeth herself out of the Lords church-rolle, and now ceaseth to be any longer the true church of Christ. And whatsoever truths or ordinances of Christ this rebellious rout still reteineth, it but usurpeth the same, without right unto them or promise of blessing upon them ; both the persons and sacrifices are abominable.

*Robins. A-
gainst Bern.
pag. 247, 248.*

Ans.

If my brother sin a scandalous sin, and I by just order make complaint thereof to the church, I have done my duty. It appertaineth to the church to excommunicate him if he repent not, but not to me, ex-
tolerati-

cept (Pope-like) I would make my self the church. I am guilty of the evil in the common-wealth and family for the redressing whereof I do not my duty in my place, which if I do in the church as I can, I am free from the finnes done and suffered there : which finnes and evils I can no more be said to suffer (wanting power to reform them) then to suffer it to blow or rain because I hinder it not, *Robins. Treat. pag. 18.*

toleration or maintenance of one sinner against reproof and conviction do necessarily dischurch a society, how then did the church of the Jews continue the true church of God, wherein sinne was generally, impudently, impenitently committed, and that by such as should have censured it in others; where the offenders were countenanced, and the reprovers persecuted, imprisoned, put to death? If no church in the world now hath that absolute promise of the Lords visible presence which that church then had till the coming of Christ, if the Messiah must be born in the true church, and the Lord did ever afford the Jews some or other visible signes of his presence in the greatest apostasie; this is nothing to the purpose. For if the maintenance of one wicked ungodly wretch wipeth a church out of the Lords church-roll, then the Jews, who did both countenance offenders, and commit wickednesse themselves and that with greedinesse, had blotted themselves out of that book. And if the Jews continued the church of God notwithstanding their great impiety and obduratenesse, because the Lord continued the visible tokens of his presence among them, then if a church or some in the church shall tolerate or countenance iniquity in others, or practice it themselves, so long as God shall be pleased to bear with their manners, and vouchsafe unto them

the signes of his gracious presence and holy ordinances, it is to be reputed the true church of God, wherewith the faithfull may hold communion in the branches of worship. If therefore the authour had well pondered his own words, or consulted the rule of our Saviour, this labour might well have been spared. But more fully to open the weaknesse of this objection; Errours, as in doctrine so in practice, are of two sorts: some fundamentall or bordering thereupon, which concern the very heart and life of religion, and cannot stand with faith and holinesse; others not fundamentall, which strike not directly at the soul of religion, though they hinder the working somewhat, or stain the work. In matters fundamentall, as the profession of faith must be intire in all points of simple belief, so must the doctrine of the church in all things concerning practice: but errours of inferiour alloy, wherein godly men dissent pardonably one from another, both concerning faith and practice, may be found and mainteined in the true church. Again, sin and iniquity is mainteined either by teaching, or by doing in our own persons, and tolerating in others whom we should reform but do not. If the church by doctrine maintein fundamentall evils, as the worshipping of angels, murder, adultery, &c. she is to be esteemed hereticall: But if the life be corrupt, not from corrupt doctrine, but contrary to the doctrine received, the church is not to be accounted false, because wicked ones, which should be cast out, are nourished in her bosome. It is true, the service which
wicked

wicked men tender unto God is abomination; as were the sacrifices which the Jews brought when their hands were full of blood; but the worship which the faithfull offer unto God in that corrupt society is pleasing and acceptable unto his majesty: The prayer of the wicked is abomination to the Lord, but the prayer of a wicked minister in respect of his office, as the prayer of the congregation, is effectually and accepted for the faithfull who seek unto God with lips unfeigned.

The prophet commandeth us, *Plead, or, Contend with your mother, contend with her, because she is not my wife, nor I her husband; that she take away her whoredomes from before my face, &c.* therefore if the church be remisse in her duty, the children of the church must protest against her.

The meaning of the prophet is, That the godly, whether in Judah or Israel, should contend with the ten tribes, who by their idolatry had fallen from the conjugall covenant which God had contracted with them, and had deserved to be put away with a bill of divorce, because they had transgressed their matrimoniall troth, and forsaking the true God had sought them other Gods, whom they did love and worship. And in like case, no question but the faithfull may publickly and sharply rebuke the abominable idolatries of a false-claiming church, such as Israel was at that time. But if this be applyed to the true church, in respect of every abuse or remissenesse, we shall pervert the words of the prophet, and run our selves upon the rocks. True it is, all abu-

Object. 3.

Hos. 2: 1, 2.

Ansiv.

We are sure they called the people out of the church of Israel when it was idolatrous, and forbade them to come at their assemblies, *Hos. 2. 2, 3, 4. and 4. 15, 17. Amos 5. 5. Ainsw. Confid. exam. pag. 8.*

ses may and ought to be reprov'd in time and place, according to the nature and quality thereof: but for every offense we cannot say truly in the name of God, The church is not the spouse of Christ, nor Christ her husband: Every abuse in worship is not the adultery of the ten tribes. If this had been the meaning of the prophet, the prophets had gone most contrary to their own rules of all others: for they sharply rebuked the personall finnes of Judah, as they received commission from the Lord; other finnes they touch'd but sparingly, if at all: but they never protested against her as no church of God; they never charged the faithfull to depart from all communion with her, lest they be partakers of her finnes. Here the Lord goeth before the faithfull in their contention with their supposed mother, they must say what the Lord putteth into their mouthes, and behave themselves towards her as the Lord is pleas'd to give them precedent by the tokens of his presence. But they that take liberty to break off communion with their true mother and spouse of Christ because of some abuses, spots and blemishes, they speak of themselves, when they charge her to be an adulteresse and not the spouse of Christ, to maintein an idolatrous antichristian, devised worship; and they run of themselves without commission or authority, when they voluntarily withdraw themselves from the ordinances of grace and communion with Christ in the same. Therefore, to conclude this point, as corrupt and unworthy members can be no cause why those

those that are whole should forsake the body or neglect the offices pertaining to the body, though they be hindred in their working, so no open grosse communicants can be any cause why the faithfull should forsake the church or communion with Christ, or neglect the duties which in particular concern themselves, though they cannot do all things that pertain to them with the whole body, as being overborn or restrained by others without whom they cannot work.

CHAP. XII.

The community of the faithfull, much lesse two or three separated from the world, and gathered together into the name of Christ by a covenant, are not the proper and immediate subject of power ecclesiasticall.

Power, might, or efficacious force is not all one with authority or power. Matter, Sense, Understanding, Will, are called *faculties* or *powers*: Magistracy, Principalities, Governments we call *powers* or *authorities*: which import not only might or power to an action, but preeminence, jurisdiction, authority and government. Ecclesiasticall power or administration of government is twofold: proper to Christ, and communicated to his church. The proper government is that which Christ hath reserved onely to himself, as not being shut up within any bounds of laws or orders revealed unto the creature, but is executed according

Power & authority differ as potentia & potestas.

In Christo fu-
it potestas ex-
cellentiz,
quam tamen
non relquit in
ecclesiis. *Harm.*
Conf. Helvet.
cap. 18. Nunc
est potestas
absoluta, quæ
& Juris dici-
tur, *Joan. de*
Parif. cap. 10.
De potest.

Acts 1. 17.
1. Tim. 3. 1.
Matth. 20. 26,
27, 28.

Acts 20. 24.
Papa non est
Dominus spi-
ritualium, sed
minister tan-
tüm, *Joan. de*
Parif. De po-
test. cap. 10.

2. Cor. 1. 21.

2. Cor. 10. 4.

Isa. 11. 4.

Job 3. 5, 6.

Acts 2. 38. &

24. 25. & 26.
28.

according to his infinite wisdom, by the secret hand of his Divine power, and that both extraordinarily and ordinarily: And this power is Lordly and Regall, power absolute and of excellency, which is called *Power of right*. Communicated government is that which being limited within the compasse of certain laws and canons of his holy word, he hath committed to be outwardly executed by the hand of his ministers and churches designed and appointed thereunto: This power is ministeriall onely, which consisteth in the outward using of the word, sacraments, &c. and in the politicall guiding of the church, concerning both the manners and necessities of all and every of them. Though this latter part onely of the communicated government, which is the politicall guiding of the church, is that discipline which generally all ecclesiasticall writers speak of, yet is not that all nor the principall of his authority. And though Christ useth it many times as a chariot for his holy word to ride upon, to subdue rebellious spirits, yet it is neither the chief nor the most ordinary means: but the simple preaching of the word is his continuall sword and sceptre, whereby he saveth his people and conquereth his enemies, beateth down strong holds, and judgeth the very thoughts and conceits of the heart. And this he doth by his word, when it is not assisted by the discipline strictly taken: for the word may stand without the discipline; so cannot the discipline without the word. But this ordinary power of the keyes or government, with the

the execution thereof, is not given to the community of the church, or whole multitude of the faithfull, much lesse to two or three separated from the world, and gathered together by covenant, so as they be the immediate and first receptacle thereof, receiving it from Christ, and virtually deriving it to others.

For no power agreeth to the multitude of the faithfull, virtuall or formall, but that which is given them of the Lord by his positive law. The whole spirituall power for the gathering and government of his church is given to Christ as Mediatour, and hath Christ our Lord, the King of Saints, Saviour of Sion, the head of all principality and power, the sole authour, which he received not of the church, but from the Father. And if the power of the church be derived from and communicated by Christ unto his church, of necessity it must draw its originall from Divine positive law, and can agree to none but as it is communicated. For although the light of nature teach that God is to be worshipped, yet in substantiall things reason teacheth not how this worship of God is to be administred, nor the house of God to be governed, but in all this we must depend upon the mind and pleasure of Christ, the King of his church, and Saviour of his body. The Apostles had none other authority but what was given them from Christ, and the church is to derive all her authority from the same fountain from which the Apostles received theirs. But the communicated power of the keyes with the execution

Argum. 1.

*John 3. 23.
Hebr. 5. 4.
Matth. 28. 19,
20.
Rev. 13. 13.
1/a. 62. 11.
Col. 2. 10.
Ephes. 4. 7.
Psalm. 2. 6.
Hebr. 5. 5.
Revel. 1. 1.
Psalm. 45. 7.*

*Ephes. 4. 11,
12.*

thereof Christ hath not given immediately to the whole multitude, but to some persons and officers designed and appointed thereunto. Peruse the severall passages of scripture wherein the power and authority of preaching the Gospel, administration of the sacraments, binding and loosing is given unto the church, and it is apparent, distinct severall persons are spoken of, and not the whole community. *Go teach all nations, and baptize them: Whose sinnes ye remit they are remitted: and Feed my sheep: Feed my lambs:* were these things spoken to the whole community, or to speciall persons? If Christ gave this power to the community or society, I desire to know the date of this commission: whether was it universall from the very beginning of the church, or took it effect after churches were planted and established by the Apostles themselves? Not the first: for then the Apostles themselves should derive their power from the community and society of the faithfull, which they did not, but immediately from Christ, and that both in respect of gifts and graces, their calling it self, and designation of their persons. What Paul saith of himself, *That he was an Apostle, not of man, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father*, that is true of all the Apostles, who were sent of Christ, as the Father sent him, and are called *Apostles of Jesus Christ*, not onely because they were to preach Christ, but because they received their commission from him. Not in after-times: for then they must shew where Christ committed the power of govern-

Matth. 28. 19,

20.

John 20. 21,

22. and 21. 15,

16.

Matth. 28. 19,

20 and 18. 17,

18.

John 20. 21,

22.

Gal. 1. 1.

Bellarmin. De

Pontif. Rom.

l. 4. cap. 23.

government first to the Apostles, and afterwards to the community of the faithfull; for which they can bring no record out of holy scripture. The ministers and guides of the church are immediately of Jesus Christ, from whom immediately they derive their power and authority, by whom they are set over their charge, in whose name they must execute their office, unto whom they must give an account, and whose ministers they are. *Take heed to your selves, and to the whole flock, over which the holy Ghost hath made you overseers:* the Apostle speaketh unto the Presbyters of Ephesus, and saith they were appointed overseers of the holy Ghost, that they might govern the church of God. They were chosen and ordained of men, and so by immediety of person were not of God; but their gifts, office and authority was immediately of God. In conferring those offices God useth the ministry of men; but the office or authority it self is not from men but from God alone. God only in regard of authority doth ever apply all power ecclesiasticall unto every particular person: his sole authority doth all in it, though sometimes, as in ordinary callings, the ministry of others doth concur. When *Christ ascended up on high, he gave gifts unto men, some to be Apostles, some Prophets, some Evangelists, some Pastours and teachers.* The Pastourship is the gift of Christ no lesse then the Apostleship; and that the more, because it is perpetuall in the church. Every Pastour is not immediately called, but the office and order of Pastours is immediately from Christ and not from

Acts 20. 28.

*Ames. tom. 1.
Bellarm. enervat. cap. 3.
cap. 8. §. 14.
Th. Aquin. 1. diff. 12. qu. 1. a. 3. & Contra Gentes; l. 3. cap. 70.
Bellarm. De Pont. Rom. lib. 2. cap. 17. §. Observandum est.
Ephes. 4. 8, 11.*

the church. The person is not immediate, but the calling or vocation, and so the order and authority and all the jurisdiction. But if the calling, order and authority be immediately from Christ, then it is not derived from the community of the faithfull as the immediate receptacle. Christ hath given some to be Apostles, and some to be Doctours; not all to be Apostles, nor all to be Doctours: But if the power of ordinary ministers be in the church, and the power of ordinary teaching be given to every believer, all should be made Doctours, though not to continue so in exercising the power. *God hath set some in the church, first Apostles, secondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers, after that miracles, &c.* Teachers in respect of their function, office and jurisdiction are immediately from God, as well as the Apostles: and God hath set some onely to be Teachers, not all. The steward is appointed of the master of the family alone, and hath all his authority and jurisdiction from him: but the ministers of the Gospel are the stewards whom he hath set over his house. The harvest is the Lords, and to him it belongeth to send forth labourers into the harvest. *There be differences of ministeries, but the same Lord.* But if they have their order, office and authority from God immediately, they derive it not from the community of the faithfull. Every embassadour in the cause of his embassage doth immediately depend upon him from whom he is sent, both with the incorrupt and indelible instrument of commandements or mandates: But the ministers
of

1. Cor. 12. 28.

verse 29.

Tit. 1. 7.

Matth. 24. 41.

Matth. 9. 38.

1. Cor. 12. 5.

of the word are the embassadours, not of men but of Christ : they are the ministers of Christ , as having received power, office and gifts from him, and not of the church, as if they derived their power from the faithfull. The Pastours may be called the ministers of the church, as *the Lords ministers* or *servants* and *the churches ministers* or *servants* are taken indifferently : but they are the Lords ministers, as they receive their authority, office and gifts from him, which they are bound to exercise and imploy to the glory of his name ; the ministers or servants of the church, because they minister to the church, or in the church, and are instituted by the head of the church for the use and profit of the body. The people are sheep and not the ministers, but the Lords and for the Lord : and the ministers are servants for the church, but the Lords and not the churches in the sense above named. And so they are and ought rather to be called the ministers of Christ then of the church : for all power spirituall and ecclesiasticall is a gift of God, supernaturall, given to the church, because it is first given to certain persons in the church, and by them agreeth to the church ; as faith, prophesie, &c. is in the church, not *primò* and immediately, but agreeth to particular persons in the church. The officers are part of the house and household, and they are the Lords servants in his house also : and the people are the Lords servants in his house, and not onely his house or household ; but they give not authority to the officers, neither be they servants

I i 3

peculiar

2. Cor. 5. 20.
1. Thess. 5. 12.

Phil. 1. 1.
2. Cor. 6. 4.
Rom. 1. 1.
2. Cor. 4. 5.
Col. 1. 24, 25.

Ezek. 34 6, 8,
31.

1. Cor. 4. 1.

Heb. 3. 5, 6.
Gal. 6. 10.
1. Pet. 2. 5.
All the faith-
full are the
Lords ser-
vants, but mi-
nisters are his
servants in of-
fice after a spe-
ciall manner.

peculiar to do the things which belong to servants in office by peculiar right. Power ecclesiasticall both of Order and Jurisdiction (as it is usually called) is signified by the power of the keyes, or the power of binding or loosing: But the power of the keyes is immediately given to the ministers and guides of the church from God, and not from the church or community of the faithfull. For the keyes contain not onely order, but power, exercise, and all ecclesiasticall jurisdiction, which the guides of the church received immediately from Christ. As Peter received the keyes of the kingdome of heaven, so the rest of the Apostles: and as the Apostles, so all their successors received them from Christ. The Apostles had extraordinary power, and might in some cases exercise it singularly and personally without concurrence of others; and their commission was of larger extent then the charge of ordinary Pastours or church-governours: but the spirituall power to bind and loose, remit and retein sinnes, open and shut the kingdome of heaven, is communicated to all officers, from the hand and by the mandate of the same Lord and Master. One ministeriall power may be in degree of dignity above another: for the power of one may be about more noble acts then the power of another; or in the same kind, the power of one may be more extended, and the power of another more contracted. Thus the Deacons had for the object of their power and care not so excellent a thing as that of Pastours, Evangelists and Apostles: thus the power of ordinary

nary Pastours was not so universall as the Apostles : even as in the orders of servants domestick, some are imployed about lesser, some about greater and more honourable subjects : But all power of the servants must be derived from the same master of the family, upon whom they depend, and unto whom they ow service : and the whole power of the Lords ministers is derived immediately from Christ ; and not from the faithfull knit together in covenant.

The church cannot convey what she never had : But the church may chuse her ministers ; as the Papists say, The church doth chuse the Pope : for the Cardinals do not chuse the Pope by their authority, but of the church : Therefore the church conveyeth authority to her ministers.

De schism. Nomine universitatis debet intelligi universitas totius Christianitatis.

Object. 1.
Gratian. Decret. dist. 79. can. 8. Quem universitatis consensus elegerit. Fr. de Zabar. Card. Florent. tract.

The church cannot virtually or formally convey what she never had, but ministerially she may, *sc.* as ministring to him who hath power and virtue of deriving it. Nothing can give that which it had not formally or virtually, unlesse it give it as an instrument to one who hath it ; but so it may give what it never had, nor is capable of. A man not having a penie of his own, may give an hundred pounds, if the King make him his almoner : A steward may give all offices in his masters house, as ministerially executing his masters pleasure. Thus the church deriveth, as taking the person whom Christ describeth, and out of power will have placed in this or that office in the church. The persons

Ans.

persons of the ministers are not immediately separated by Christ to that function, as were the Apostles: but their gifts, calling and authority is immediately from him. In respect of their graces and office there interveneth no midst betwixt Christ and them: but the appointment or designation of them to this or that place is from the church. The office is not given of men but of God onely, although in conferring and speciall applying that power and exercise he use men as instruments or ministers. The church is in setting out or ordaining this or that man, as the colledge is in chusing, when she taketh the man whom the statute of her Founder doth manifestly designe: And therefore though the church have power to elect their minister, it followeth not that the power of the keyes is immediately in the whole multitude or society of the faithfull. For electours have not evermore authority over him whom they elect; but authority and power onely to apply that power to him whom they chuse. The power of the Imperiall dignity is not in the electours of the Emperours; nor the power of that office and authority whereunto a minister is elected, in the church who chuseth him to that office. If we consider what men give or give not, universally it must be denyed that any men can make ministers; because they do not give the office, gifts or authority, which is from Christ alone. And therefore as they receive their office and graces from God, so they execute their office in the name of Christ, and not of the church: whereas
if

Chamier. tom.
2. lib. 11. cap.
19. §. 11.

if the church did virtually and out of power make an officer, he should execute his office in her name, as we see with those whom the king maketh in the common-wealth. But the church dealeth in the election of ministers in a steward-like manner, ministering to the sole Lord and Master of the house; and receiveth them into the house, not in her own, but in the Lords name, and to do their office not in her name but in the name of their Lord and Master, who onely out of power did conferre that office upon them. Whence it followeth, that ordinary power of the keyes with the execution thereof is not given to the communitie of the faithfull or the whole multitude, much lesse to two or three knit together in covenant.

The keyes of the kingdome of heaven were promised and given to Peter as to a faithfull man, and so to all the faithfull, or to the communitie of the faithfull. By *the keyes* is meant the Gospel of Christ, opening a way by him and his merits as the doore into the kingdome: and we must take heed of this deep delusion of Antichrist, in imagining that this power of binding or loosing sinnes is held to any office or order in the church. Whereupon it followeth necessarily, that one faithfull man, yea or woman either, may as truly and effectually loose or bind both in heaven and earth as all the ministers in the world.

Either this is not to the purpose, or the power of the keyes, and so all communicated power ecclesiasticall with the execution thereof, is committed to every faithfull man and woman as truly

Object. 2.

Matth. 16. 17.

*Robins. A-
gainst Bern.
pag. 149, 150.*

Idem, pag. 150.

Ans.

as to the Apostles. That private Christians, yea women and children, may exhort, rebuke, or comfort *ex officio charitatis generali*, out of the generall office of charity, we confesse; that by such exhortations people have been brought to the faith, we also believe: But that power to preach *per modum legationis*, by way of embassage, or power of the keyes hath been committed to them, we never find: rather, this power was proper to the ministers *ex Divino instituto speciali*, by speciall Divine institution, and established upon speciall promise. Unto Peter making confession was the promise of the keyes made, but not to him as a confessor, but to him and the rest as they should be Apostles sent forth with authoritie and commission to preach the Gospel, plant churches, bind and loose, &c. Otherwise not onely the communie of the faithfull, but every faithfull man or woman, might exercise those acts of feeding, binding and loosing, and ruling, implied in the power of the keyes. In phrase of speech *to deliver the keyes unto a man*, is to make him an officer, steward, or dispenser in the house under his lord and master, to give him authority to open and shut, bind and loose. When our Saviour said to his Disciples, *Whose sinnes ye remit, they are remitted; As my Father sent me, so send I you; Go, teach all nations; Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven*: doth he not appoint them to chief offices in his house? and what doth he give them more then the keyes of the kingdom? A legate or messenger is not sent without

Isa. 22. 23, 24.

out authority, power and jurisdiction; nor the keyes of the house committed to his trust and care who is not in office. *The keyes of the kingdom* import not onely authority and jurisdiction, but power of exercising: and for that reason some have thought Peter to be a sociall type of the whole church, because the church doth exercise the keyes. But the community of the faithfull are not officers in the house, to exercise the power of the keyes, to open and to shut. And if Peter received the keyes from Christ as a faithfull man, then the Apostles and their successours received their order and jurisdiction, their authority and power of exercising from the faithfull and not from Christ immediately. Thus Protestant Divines dispute against the Papists, If Bishops receive their authority and power of exercising immediately from Christ by mandate, mission and commission, then they derive it not from the Pope. And by the same reason, if the power of the keyes be the immediate gift of God to the Apostles and their successours, then they derive not their power and authority from the people or faithfull in covenant. There is a key of supreme Authority, proper to God alone; a key of Excellency, given to Christ, and proper to him; a key of Ministry, given to the Apostles and their successours; and (if any be pleased so to call it) a key of Charity, given to all the faithfull, who are able to exhort, rebuke, comfort, and instruct. For every Christian may admonish, rebuke, comfort, exhort, and so convert a sinner

The office of teaching is laid upon some few chosen and ordained thereunto. Into this office may no man intrude, nor usurp it without a lawfull calling, *Ans.* Mr Bern. reas. dispr. 176.

from the errour of his way, and cover a multitude of sinnes: but this is onely an act of love and charity, an office or duty which by right of brotherhood every one oweth unto his neighbour without any speciall calling or authority. Whereas the matter we speak of is the spirituall power which Christ hath given for the preservation and government of his church, the exercise whereof consisteth in acts of order, office, ministry, or function, whereunto they are in speciall designed and called. And so if the matter of the exhortation, rebuke or admonition be one for substance, the order, function, authority, commission, power of exercising, and calling to exercise is not the same. And therefore the power of the keys promised to Peter, which doth note power and authority of function, was not promised nor given to the communitie of the faithfull, much lesse to every faithfull man or woman.

Object. 3.

The power of the keys given to the Apostles, was given to the church, *intuitu ejusdem tanquam finis & totius*. The flux of ecclesiasticall authority from the church is two fold: *per intuitum*, as in them that be immediately called of Christ: & *per interventum*, as in them that are called mediately.

Ans.

It is true, the Apostles were given to the church *intuitu ejusdem tanquam finis*, and the power they received was for the good of the whole: but this is not enough that power may be said to be received immediately by the church as the first receptacle of it, and from it derived unto others; but this

this power must be in the community as the first subject from whom it cometh to the officers. As the power of seeing is not onely given *instaurat hominis* as the end of it, and the *totum* to whom it agreeth, but is *in homine* as the first subject from whom it cometh to the eye. The Apostles and other governours were given of Christ for the church, as for the end; and all their authority was given unto them for the church, as for the whole: but the authority it self was immediately derived from Christ, and is not in the church as the immediate subject thereof. The authority of the Apostles and other guides was for the church, given for the good of the whole society, and so may be called the authority of the church: but the authority is not immediately in the church as the subject, nor derived from the church, but from Christ the King of the church. The authority of governours is given of Christ, for a gift to the church, but not for a gift absolute, that it may reside in the power of the whole church to whom it is given, but for a conditionall gift, that it may be communicated to the governours themselves for the edification of the whole. It is one thing then to ask for what end or whose use the keyes are given; another, to whom. *To every one is given the declaration of the spirit for profit*, that is, the good of the church. But was this gift given to the community of the faithfull first, and immediately? No; by gift and possession it was given to some, but for use and profit it was publick.

1. Cor. 3. 22. 6.

4. 1.

1. Tim. 3. 15.

1. Cor. 12. 7.

1. Cor. 3. 12.

1. Tim. 3. 15.

1. Cor. 4. 1.

Object. 4.

Robins. A-
gainst Bern.
pag. 226, &
133.

Idem, pag. 217.

Answ.

As the Saints are not priests only for themselves, but for their brethren, for whom they offer up the spirituall sacrifices of prayer and thanksgiving; so neither are they kings for themselves alone, but for their brethren also, having the power of Christ whereby to judge them, 1. Cor. 5. 4, 12. the keyes of the kingdome to bind and loose them, Matth. 16. 19. in the order of him prescribed. The order of kings is the highest order or estate in the church: but the order of Saints is the order of kings, and we are kings as we are Saints, not as we are officers, Exod. 19. 6. 1. Pet. 2. 9. Rev. 1. 6.

Christ maketh every believer a king, priest, and prophet, to teach, exhort, reprove, comfort, offer up spirituall sacrifices of prayer and praise, and to guide and govern in the wayes of godliness: But this belongeth not to the spirituall, ministeriall power and authority which Christ hath given for the conservation and government of his church. For every Christian man and woman is made a king, priest and prophet unto God to perform all offices required in that relation: but the spirituall power of government with the execution thereof is not committed to every believer in particular, nor to any one. The officers of Christ do neither feed and teach as prophets, nor govern as kings, nor offer sacrifices as priests. The word it self teaching and feeding is one thing, which floweth from Christ as Prophet: the administration of the word, whence also floweth the act of governing, is from Christ as King. It is

is from internall communion with Christ, that the sound, sincere, faithfull, and they onely are made spirituall kings and priests unto God: but it is from Christ as King, governing externally, as he beareth the similitude of a politicall head, that his servants do feed, rule and censure in his name. They onely are made true kings and priests unto God who have received from Christ the life of grace: but they have received authority from Christ to do service in his church who have not received life of grace nor are made kings or priests unto God. The Kingdome, Priesthood, or Prophesie of Christ doth make no man politically either priest, or king, or prophet: for then all believers should exercise the office of politicall priests, kings and prophets in the church; which is opposite to the nature of Christs kingdome. Christ according to his Person is neither externall King nor Pastour; but doth govern his church externally by pastours and ministers, yet not as by kings or priests politically, but as servants onely. Pastours and teachers are but officers in the church, and in no kingly authority by participation of Christs kingly office, neither are they as civill governours, though the Lords servants, yet the peoples lords and masters. But it is one thing to be a spirituall king or priest unto God, another to be a pastour or teacher in Gods church: for that is common to all Christians, this peculiar unto them that have received authority of function from Christ. The Saints therefore as spirituall kings have not received power from Christ by function

Object. 4.

Matth. 18. 19.
Ephef. 4. 11.

Object. 5.

function or authority to censure their brethren, or externally to rule or govern; but this belongeth to them who are designed of Christ the King unto this office. Every Christian woman may exhort or reprove without any designement of the church: is every woman made a prophet externally in the church? Is power to administer the sacraments, and authoritatively to censure offenders, (*scilicet auctoritate muneris not officii generalis or charitatis*) committed to every member of the society, because every believer may exhort and admonish, not onely his brother of the same or another society, but even them that are without? By *the keyes of the kingdome*, power and jurisdiction is noted, and not the bare duty of instruction or admonition. The power of the keyes is given by Christ, as the King of his church, as is evident by the generall institution of ecclesiasticall politie, and the particular narration of politie instituted: but that every Christian was sent forth with authority and commission we never read. And if this reason be of any force, every believer man or woman is of equall authority to the Apostles in matters of ecclesiasticall government, because the order of saints is the order of kings, and that is the highest: which is directly crosse to the holy scripture and the order appointed by Christ the King and Head of his church.

They that have received Christ, have received the power of Christ, and his whole power: for Christ and his power are not divided, nor one part of his power from another: But every company

pany or communion of faithfull people have received Christ, John 1. 12. Rom. 8. 32. Isa. 9. 6. and with him power, and right to enjoy him (though all the world be against it) in all the means by which he doth communicate himself unto his church.

*Robins. A-
gainst Bern.
pag. 131.*

This objection is not to be understood of the essentially Divine power of Christ which is proper to him as the Sonne of God, nor of the uncommunicated power of Christ given to him as Mediatour, nor of that communion and fellowship which every sincere Christian and faithfull soul hath with him in his death and resurrection; but of the communicated power of Christ which he hath given to his church or certain officers in the church for the good government of all and every member of that society: And in this sense it is not true, that Christ hath given his whole power first and immediately to every person, or every company, two or three gathered together, who receive him. Every believer, man or woman, hath received Christ, as well as every company or communion of people: hath every one received power to preach the word, administer the sacraments, feed, rule, bind and loose, censure and absolve? women and children as well as men? two as well as two hundred? private persons as well as guides? with or without consent of the rest? as well out of as in case of necessity? Every sound believer is knit to Christ, as a branch to the Vine, as a live-member to the Head, or a wife to the Husband, and receiveth the sap of grace,

Answ.

*John 1. 12.
Rom. 8. 32.
Isa. 9. 6.*

*John 15. 1, 5.
Ephes. 1. 22,
23. & 4. 15, 16.
& 5. 2, 3.
Ephes. 5. 25,
29. 30.
Revel. 21. 2.*

*Matth. 28. 19,
20.*

Object. 6.

*Robins. A-
gainst Bern.
pag. 123. &
133.*

Ans. w.

sense, living and motion immediately from Christ the true Vine, and Head of his church: But every believer or company of believers must not challenge that power and authority immediately which Christ doth communicate to his ministers and guides for the right managing of all things in his church, or to the church with the guides and officers for the edification of the body. All power of the naturall body must be together, but it is not so in the spirituall. And if it was, the society must grow up into a perfect body, complete in all parts, before it can have or exercise the power of the whole: which two or three gathered together ordinarily cannot be in politicall order, as may be shewed hereafter.

The church is a Queen, a Mother, a Lady, a Spouse, and to whom should Christ first commit his power but to his Queen: we know well the church is the wife and spouse of Christ, and the Ministers stewards. Cant. 8. 9. Ephes. 5. 29, 30, 32. 1. Cor. 4. 1.

To let passe, that this title of *Spouse* or *Queen* may be applyed to one believer as well as two or three, and that the guides and officers are known by those titles and relations as well as believers not in office. Considering this power is not a Lordly power, but a power of doing service to the church for Christ his sake, and his kingdome: therefore it is fit it should be committed to some persons, and not to the whole community, which is the Queen of Christ. For Christ the King of his church hath not committed power to his church

Church or Queen to serve her self properly, but to have persons, who in this relation should stand distinguished from her, who are in his name to do her service. The power of priesthood was not first in the church of Israel, and so derived to the priests; but immediately from Christ seated in Aaron and his sons. The community of the faithfull have neither the power of government, nor the use of that power. Not the power: for it is immediately from Christ seated in such officers or principall members as Christ himself the King of his church shall authorize, and not in the body considered apart from the officers. Nor the use of that power; because that cannot be enjoyed without officers. And if it may stand with the honour of the church to want the exercise or dispensation of that power or authority, it derogateth nothing from the prerogative of the faithfull to want the power it self. For it is as much for the welfare and good of the church, that Christ out of respect to his Spouse hath given her commandment, as his steward, to elect and choose officers according to his appointment who should receive power and authority from him for such and such offices and services in the church, as that he should seat the power it self in a few or many believers, to be derived from them unto others according to pleasure. For though their authority and power be from Christ and not from the church, yet the service and authority is for the church in the name of Christ: and in that sense they are subject to the church. In the church

2. Cor. 4. 5.

the officers are the ministers of Christ, to execute and administer the judgements and censures of God against the obstinate, but for the church. They are for the people, but not ministers of the people, as if they drew their authority from them, and were to execute their judgements. But though the community hath not power given unto them, yet such estate is put upon them by Christ the King and Husband of his church, that all power is to be executed in such manner as standeth with respect to their excellency.

Argum. 2.

If spirituall and ecclesiasticall power be in the church or community of the faithfull, the church doth not onely call but make officers out of virtue and power received into herself, and then should the church have a true lordlike power in regard of her ministers. For as he that will derive authority to the church maketh himself Lord of the church, so if the church derive authority to the ministers of Christ she maketh herself Lady or Mistresse over them in the exercise of that lordlike authority. For, as all men know, it is the property of the Lord and Master to impart authority. Did the church give power to the Pastours and Teachers, she might make the sacrament and preaching, which one doth in order, no sacrament, no preaching: for it is the order instituted of God that giveth being and efficacy to these ordinances: and if the power of ruling, feeding, and dispensing the holy things of God do reside in the faithfull, the word and sacrament in respect of dispensation and efficacy shall depend upon the order and institution

tution of the society. If the power of the keyes be derived from the community of the faithfull, then are all officers immediately and formally servants to the church, and must do every thing in the name of the church, rule, feed, bind, loose, remit and retein sinnes, preach, and administer the sacraments; then they must perform their office according to the direction of the church, more or lesse, seldome or frequent, remisse or diligent: for from whom are they to receive direction how to carry themselves in their office but from him or them from whom they receive their office, whose work they are to do, and from whom they must expect reward. If their office and power be of God immediately, they must do the duties of their place according to his designement, and unto him they must give account: But if their power and function be from the church, the church must give account to God, and the officers unto the church, whom she doth take to be her helpers. If it be said that God will have the church to chuse officers to execute the power committed unto her, the answer is, Either God will have her elect officers of his designement, to do his work, according to that power he shall give them, and by his direction; and then they are Gods servants and not the churches, and receive their charge and function immediately from God, and not from the people: or he leaveth it to the arbitrement of the church to chuse according to pleasure such as must receive charge and authority from her; and then they must exe-

cute their office in her name, so as shall seem good unto the church, and neither longer nor otherwise. For if the ministers of the church be subject to God and Christ by the intervention of the faithfull onely, that they preach or administer the sacraments, rule or feed, they have it from the people and not from God. And if they depend immediately upon the faithfull, to wit, two or three gathered together in covenant, they must derive and draw from them what in order they are to preach unto men in the name of the Lord: For from him must the embassadour learn his errand from whom he receiveth his commission. Moreover, if the power of the keyes be given first and immediately unto the community of the faithfull, what reason can be given why in defect of officers the church might not rule, govern, feed, bind, loose, preach, and administer the sacraments; or if any fail in any office, why she might not supply that want by her power? For the power of the keyes doth contain both authority and exercise; power being given to this end, that it might be exercised as it is vouchsafed. But the church, when she is destitute of officers, cannot execute those acts of rule, nor by her power supply the want of any office: onely she hath a ministry of calling one whom Christ hath described, that from Christ he may have power of office given him in the vacant place.

Object. 1.
2. Cor. 4. 5.

In the church of Christ the officers are called *servants*, and in that relation the church may be called a *Lord*: And if Christ truly call *the Sonne*

of

of man Lord of the Sabbath, because the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath, we may also call the church in a respect Lord of the officers, for the officers are for the church, and not the church for them. The church-officers are the church-servants; and it is strange men should have no command over their servants.

Robins. *A-*
gainst Bern.
pag. 215.

Idem, pag. 214.

Answ.

1. Pet. 5. 4.

Matth. 12. 8.
Mark 2. 27,
28.

Chemn. Harm.
cap. 48. Pisc.
in Matth. 12.
8. Schol. Be-
za, Annot. in
Marc. 2. 28.

If the officers of Christ be both of and for the church or people and community, the people may not onely in some respects be called their Lords, but indeed they have a true lordlike power over them. But the church hath no lordlike power over the ministers of Christ, whom he hath set over his house to rule and guide it by authority received from him and according to his direction, whose ministers properly they are, who is the Prince of Pastours. The object about which the ecclesiasticall ministry is exercised is the church, and their function is for the good of the church: but the principall cause and Lord of the ministers upon whom they depend is Christ and not the church. When our Saviour saith, *The Sonne of man is Lord of the Sabbath*, he speaketh of himself alone, rather then of man in generall: For to be the Lord of the Sabbath, that is, to have the Sabbath in his power, so as he might dispense or do contrary to the law, is proper to the Law-giver. But not to insist thereupon, the ministers are appointed for the good of the flocks committed to their charge in the name of Christ, but the flocks neither are nor ought to be called Lords or Masters of their Pastours or Teachers.

As

Object. 2.

As in the naturall body all power is first in the community or *totum*, and afterwards in a particular person or part, so it is in the body ecclesiasticall.

Answ.

Parabola & analogia non oportet, nec potest per omnia esse similis; alijs non jam parabola, sed ipsa eadem res esset, Th. Aquin. 3. part. qu. 8.

All that is true in the body naturall or politick cannot be applyed to the mysticall body of Christ: For *analogum* is not *in omni simile*; for then it should be the same with the *analogatum*. All the power of hearing, seeing, &c. are in the whole man, which doth produce them effectually, though formally and instrumentally they are in the eare and eye: and the reason is, because these powers are naturall; and whatever is naturall, doth first agree to the community or *totum*, and afterward to a particular person or part: But all that is in these bodies cannot hold in Christs mysticall body. In a naturall body the power is first in the community; in a particular person, from it: but all ecclesiasticall power is first in our King, before any in the church from him. In naturall bodies the power of seeing is first immediately in the man, and for the man, in the eye: In the mysticall body the faith of the believer is not first immediately in all, then in the believer, but first of all and immediately in the personall believer, for whose good it serveth more properly then for the whole; every man being to live by his own faith. One man is capable of grace, which cannot agree to the whole community immediately. The power of Apostleship or of ordinary ministry was not first in the church and so derived to the Apostles and ministers, but immediately from Christ

Christ seated in the Apostles and ordinary Pastours and Teachers. For seeing power ecclesiasticall was first in Christ, as in a prince, not subject to the church, or dependent upon her, consequently it pertaineth to him as prince to take order concerning his embassadours and substitutes, whose power is derived from him, not from the church, who of her own nature is not a miltresse in spirituall things, but the servant of Jesus Christ, redeemed by him. Christ is the first authour of this spirituall power, upon whose will and institution all things depend: as for the church, she can give no spirituall power, to few or many, one or more, as please herself, for what time she will, but must submit to that which Christ hath left for her spirituall good and comfort.

The words are as clear as the sun, *Tell the church*, that is, the congregation or assembly whereof the offender is a member: which rule concerneth all the visible churches in the world, since the power of excommunication is an essentiall property, one of the keyes of the kingdome, the onely solemn ordinance in the church for the humbling and saving of an obstinate offender, and as necessary as the power to receive in members, without which a church cannot be gathered or consist. But what are we to understand by the *church* or *assembly*? A company consisting though but of two or three separated from the world, whether Unchristian or Antichristian, and gathered into the name of Christ by a covenant, made to walk in the wayes of God made known unto them, though they be

Object. 3.
Robins. A-
gainst Bern.
pag. 17c.

Idem, pag. 127.

Idem, pag 125.

M m

without

Idem, pag. 126.

Acts 19. 32.

40. & 11. 26.

Acts 14. 27.

1. Cor. 12. 28.

Robins. ubi su-

pra, pag. 128.

Idem, pag. 130.

Idem, pag. 181.

without any officers among them; which company being a church hath interest in all the holy things of Christ within and amongst themselves immediately, under him the head, without any forrein aid or assistance. For a set company of believers must needs be a constituted visible church. Two or three or more people making Peters confession, Matth. 16. are the church. There were churches before elders ordained: and a company of faithfull people without officers may be in covenant with God, and have him dwell amongst them, and may have communion one with another, and their children have right to baptisme. And it must be considered that two or three gathered together have the same right with two or three hundred. By *two or three* having this power of binding or loosing, cannot be meant two or three ministers considered severally from the body (which alone are not the church for any publick administration, but the officers of the church) but by *two or three* are meant the meanest communion or society of Saints, whether with officers or without officers. This then is that which he would clearly evince out of this text of scripture, That spirituall power is essentially and primarily given to the society of the faithfull, few or many, though but two or three; to the faithfull without their guides or officers, who are added to the church, and derive their authority from the church, to whom it agreeth secondarily and by accident: and so by *the church* understand any collection of the faithfull united in covenant,

nant, great or small, few or many, with or without guides or officers.

The church is sometimes put for believers, few or many; But to the making up of a visible distinct society or congregation properly so called, or body politicall, furnished with the power of Christ for government, and the exercise of all religious duties and ordinances of worship, a competent number is requisite and necessary. At first Adam and Eve were the church, when there were none other persons in the world, and might perform all the offices of a church at that time required of them: But two or three are no sufficient number to make up that society which now we speak of. There is a twofold church, as the society of Christians is twofold; publick, or private. The private society may be in one family, though small: The publick society is a convenient number of such as do in one uniform agreed course of outward joynt worship of God professe that righteousness which is by the faith of Jesus Christ. The number of men worshipping God aright is a church, be it few or many: but two or three cannot make up an intire society, consisting of all its parts, fitted to the execution of all substantiall offices pertaining to the body or corporation. A competent and fit number there must be to make up this body; but no precise number is or can be determined: it may be more or lesse according to the circumstances of time, place, and other occurrences. Therefore for our direction in this case it is good to look at their pattern who first planted

Ans.

*Rom. 15. 6.
Col. 4. 11.*

*Acts 1. 38, 41.
8. 5, 6, 7, 12,
13. & 9. 31.
Rom. 1. 17. &
3. 21.
Philipp. 3. 9.*

Tit. 1. 5.

Acts 14. 23.

E 16. 4.

Revel. 1. 11.

as is put for
ev, as is evi-
dent by like
places. Thechurch in E-
phesus, Ephes.

1. 1. Revel. 2.

1. in Philippi,

Phil. 1. 1. in
Corinth,

1. Cor. 1. 2.

in Jerusalem,

Acts 8. 1. &

11. 12. in An-
tioch, Acts

13. 1. & in

Smyrna, Rev.

2. 8, 12, &c.

the churches of God, according to the wisdom of God, and by the direction of his Spirit. And to begin with the Apostles, because we speak of Christian churches, first by comparing passages of holy scripture together we shall find, that *to ordain elders city by city*, and *to ordain elders church by church*, are used as phrases adæquate and æquipollent; not that the whole multitude of the one and locall bounds of the other should make but one congregation, but because the Christians or believers within those bounds or limits were framed into one Christian society or church. For Presbyters were not given but to Disciples and Christians now converted out of the multitude and locall limits wherewith cities were bounded. Now though the Apostles framing the cities with their suburbs and territories into one church or society on the present occasion doth not exclude the constituting of any other society or congregation within the same locall bounds, when the multitude of believers should be encreased; yet it doth evidently confirm, that the number of believers requisite to the making up of a perfect or complete church in all parts and offices must not be small. The Apostles never comprehend the multitude of citizens unconverted to the profession of the faith under the name of *the church*; neither can it be imagined, that the whole multitude within those locall circuits, united in civil society, was linked by any spirituall bond or tie: but the city had the reason of an ample continent, the church of a thing contained. Neverthelesse the blessing

blessing of God considered, which did extraordinarily accompany the labours of the Apostles, according to the prophecies foregoing touching the calling of the Gentiles, the number of believers, we may well think, within that circuit was very great. But if we take a view of particular churches, the matter will be more plain. The Christian church at Jerusalem was one distinct society, which did congregate upon occasion, and held communion in the ordinances of worship: But it grew and encreased, first to three thousand, then to five thousand; afterward multitudes of men and women were added, and then it came to millions. It may be in this last number such believers are reckoned as had no fixed habitation in Jerusalem, but came thither upon occasion, and were there *in transitu*, and not as fixed members of this church: *viz.* such as came up by occasion of the Passcover or Pentecost or other like feast, and were onely there for the present. It may be the Apostles tolerated them, though more then could fitly meet together ordinarily in one congregation, because they foresaw such times to ensue, wherein many of them should translate themselves, and be dispersed hither and thither. It may be also, God let it grow more rank and abundant then ordinary churches, because it was *ecclesia surcularis*, many of whose branches were to be translated in their time. But whatsoever might be the reason of this great number, this is certain, the multitude was great: for after it was grown to five thousand, and multitudes of men and women

Acts 2. 41, 47.
 & 8. 12. & 9.
 35, 42. & 11.
 21, 24. & 13.
 48. & 14. 21.
 & 17. 12. &
 18. 8.

Acts 8. 1. &
 15. 4.
Acts 2. 42, 44.
 46. & 5. 12.
 & 6. 1. & 15.
 22. & 21. 22.

Acts 2. 41. &
 4. 4.
Acts 9. 14.
Acts 21. 20.

Acts 6. 1.

Acts 6. 7.

Ezra 2. 36, 37,

38, 39.

Acts 6. 2. & 8.

1. & 15. 2, 4.

Acts 6. 2, 3, 4.

Acts 8. 6.

Acts 8. 11, 12.

Acts 8. 14.

Acts 13. 1. &

14. 27.

Acts 11. 21.

vers. 24.

Acts 11. 26,

27. & 15. 30,

34, 35.

Acts 13. 44,

48.

were added, it increased daily: The number of disciples increased greatly in Jerusalem, and a great company of the Priests were obedient to the faith. The Syriack Interpreter hath it, *Of the Jews, &c.* inhabiting Judea: but the Greek, Arabick, Ethiopick, Vulgar, and Chrysostom approve the former. And the number of Priests was not small, as the scripture witnesseth. And when all the Apostles, or the greatest part of them, remained at Jerusalem, continuing in the ministry of the word and prayer, and that they might do it the more earnestly and diligently, left off the care of the poore to others, how can we think that the whole church did not multiply and increase? It is most probable, that the whole city of Samaria in a manner embraced the faith. The people gave heed with one accord unto those things which Philip spake. As the whole city from the least unto the greatest had given heed to Simon Magus before, so to Philip now, when he preached Christ. It is said also that Samaria received the Gospel, which argueth that it had universall entertainment among them. In other churches we shall not find the number of believers mentioned precisely: but without question it was not small in Antioch of which it is said, a great number believing, turned unto the Lord, as that Barnabas by his preaching added a great multitude unto the Lord; and that Paul and Barnabas continued there teaching and preaching with many others the word of the Lord. The like may be said of Corinth, Philippi, and the seven churches of Asia, which are all spoken

ken of as particular churches and societies. They stretch the limits of the church of Corinth too farre that extend it to all the Saints in Achaia, because the Apostle nameth the rest of Achaia with them, as he doth all Saints in all places. For he might speak of them as of divers churches in one province, as he doth in other places: And it is too grosse to think that all in Achaia came to Corinth to be instructed, and make their contribution, every church using the first day of the week when they assembled, to make their collections within themselves. Neither can it be well conceived how all Achaia should assemble together for the service of God and the execution of discipline, as it is noted of the church of Corinth. It will easily be credited that the number of believers was great in Ephesus, if we call to mind, that when Paul had been there but two yeares all they which dwelt in Asia had heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Græcians, those that had used curious arts came and burned their books in the sight of all men, (which could not be done without great danger unto the church, unlesse a great part of the city had believed) the art of making shrines and Diana's temple was in danger to be set at nothing, and that a great doore and effectually was opened unto the Apostle at Ephesus. And that the multitude of believers was great in all proper, settled, politicall societies, appeareth in this, that the Apostles appointed divers overseers, elders and deacons to teach and govern the people and take care of the poore: which they would not have done,

2. Cor. 9. 2. &
11. 10.

Acts 15. 23.

1. Cor. 16. 1, 2.

1. Cor. 5. 4.
1. Cor. 11. 17,
23.
1. Cor. 14. 23.

Acts 19. 10.

Acts 19. 19.

vers. 26, 27.

1. Cor. 16. 9.

Phil. 1. 1.
Acts 20. 17,
25.
Acts 6. 3. &
14. 23.

Til. 1. 5.
Jam. 5. 14.

done, nor could the church have borne the charge thereof, if the number had not been large. Two or three making Peters confession cannot be the church in this passage of scripture: for the party complained of is one member, and the complainant another; and he is to take with him one or two, if he be not heard, before he bring the matter unto the church: and how then shall any two or three separated from the world and consenting together in an holy covenant be *the church* in this place. If any two or three consenting in an holy covenant serve to make up this community or church, what hindreth but it may consist of women and children onely? and so the spirituall authority of teaching, exhorting, binding & loosing, remitting & reteining sins, shall originally & *executive* agree unto a community of believing women whereof every member is regularly incapable. For the Apostle teacheth plainly, that a woman may not speak in the congregation. And though he speak particularly of prophesying and teaching, yet layeth he down a more generall rule, forbidding all such speaking as in which authority is used, that is, usurped over the man, which is done specially in judgement. And if a woman may not so much as move a question in the church for instruction, how much lesse may she give a voice or rather a reproof for censure? And if women be debarred by their sex as from ordinary prophesying, so from any other dealing wherein they take authority over the man, how can two or three believing women be the church, with power ministeriall,

1. Cor. 14. 34.
1. Tim. 2. 14.

Robins. Of the
lawfulnessse
Ec. pag. 76,
77.

Robins. A-
gainst Bern.
pag. 106.

nisteriall, publickly to bind and loose, remit and retein finnes? And if two or three gathered together have the same right and power with two or three hundred, or two or three thousand, let the society without officers be never so great, it cannot be the church that is here meant. For those Divines which hold power and authority of binding and loosing to be delivered by Christ to the whole church, that is, to every particular church collectively; because it pertaineth to them to deny Christian communion to such wicked persons as adde contumacy to their disobedience, and to remit the punishment again upon repentance, they generally with one consent maintein, that the execution and judicall exercising of this power pertaineth to that company and assembly of officers or governours in every church which the Apostle calleth a *presbytery*. But our Saviour in that text of Scripture speaketh of the execution and exercise of the power of binding and loosing, which was never committed to the community of the faithfull without officers. If the joynt consent of orthodox Divines move not, let it be considered, that the exercise of ecclesiasticall censures externall and authoritative was never committed to the community of the faithfull without officers, never exercised by the faithfull in any age of the Christian church. Let such as plead for this power bring forth either commission for it or precedent of it, if they be able. The externall and authoritative power of binding and loosing, as the greatest power in the church, doth comprehend under it all matters subordinate and of the same nature,

1.Tim.4.14.

power to preach the word autoritatively, and to admit unto or put from the sacraments : but the exercise of this inferiour power was never committed to a Christian society or church without officers. And if we will not make one text of scripture contrary to another, we cannot think the exercise of that power is here given to the community of the faithfull, few or many, without officers, which in all other places is given to the governours, never to the faithfull without guides. By *the church* the whole multitude of believers, whether with officers or without, cannot be understood. For that power agreeth not to the whole body *in actu primo* or *in esse* (as they speak) whereof many particular members regularly are not capable ; as the faculty of speaking or seeing should not first belong to man as the *principium Quod*, if the whole in all parts were not capable of that power. But the power of binding or loosing cannot regularly agree to many particular members of that community *sc.* women and children. And if women and children though believers be here excluded, the word *church*, must not be taken in the largest and most ordinary signification in the new Testament : for so it comprehendeth all believers, disciples, faithfull linked in society. If the authority of binding or loosing pertain to the whole church *in actu primo sive in esse*, and to the Presbytery alone *in actu secundo sive in operari*, as the act of speaking pertaineth to a man as the *principium Quod*, but to the tongue alone as the *principium Quo*, yet the church cannot

not be taken for the whole community : for our Saviour speaketh of the actuall execution of this power, (and not of the power it self) which onely belongeth to the governours. And if the church be the Christian Presbytery as it exerciseth discipline, and not the multitude of the faithfull, then is this text in vain alledged to proove all power Ecclesiasticall to be originally and by way of execution in the community of the faithfull : then the power of hearing, examining, determining, and censuring doth primarily belong unto the Presbytery and not unto the faithfull in common. God is the God of order and not of confusion: But if the hearing and determining of all causes which may fall out in a society consisting of three or four, six or eight, ten or twenty thousand persons (for so many may be in one society) must be referred to the whole community (and that upon the Lords day to be joyned with the administration of the word, sacraments, almes, and the rest ; yea, in these cases to go before the other parts of worship, lest the holy things of God be polluted by notorious obstinate offenders) disorder and confusion cannot be avoyded. When shall controversies be decided ? How shall the community have sufficient intelligence of the state and quality of matters ? Either businesses must be determined rashly, or infinitely protracted, before they can be heard of every man, and they agreed together. In so great a multitude it cannot be conceived how things should be done seasonably, moderately, in order, without partiality and dissension,

sion, where every one may walk according to his own rule, and no man to be guided or directed by another, but as pleaseth himself. And if spirituall power *originaliter & executive* be given to every member of and to the whole community of the faithfull, then is every member in some sort a ruler and governour. And if we search into the records of the church, we shall find none example, either in the holy scriptures or the histories of the ancient church, where the universall multitude of the faithfull, none directing or governing the action, did lawfully proceed in the determination of spirituall matters of this kind. In the old testament not onely *קהל*, when it is rendred *Synagoga*, but *קנין* when it is translated *Ecclesia*, signifieth an assembly of princes and elders of the people, and so of prophets likewise: for when the words are generall, to note any assembly of men met together, whether civil or sacred, it is not strange if the congregation of princes, nobles, elders, and prophets assembled be known by the same name. In the new Testament the word *church* is sometimes an assembly or company howsoever gathered together; but ordinarily it noteth a society of faithfull Christians, as all and every saint are called *saints*. But as the Apostle, when he doth grievously reprehend the Corinthians that they had not brought the knowledge of their contentions to the saints, he understandeth not the promiscuous multitude, but some speciall or chief amongst them: So by *the church*, which noteth a multitude or society of believers, we must under-

Psal. 82. 1.
Numb. 35. 12,
 24, 25. *with*
Deut. 1. 16.
Numb. 27. 1,
 27. *with* 36. 1, 2
Deut. 19. 11,
 12. & 21. 20.
Josh. 17. 5, 6, 7.
 & 26. *with* 4. v.
Exod. 12. 3.
Lev. 8. 3. *with*
 9. 1, 3.
1. Chron. 13. 2,
 3. & 29. 1, 6.
with 28. 1, 2.
2. Chron. 1. 2, 3
Deut. 31. 28,
 50.
1. Kings 8. 1, 2.
with 55. v.
See Deut. 23.
 1. 2, 3.
Lev. 4. 14.
2. Chron. 20. 5.
 & 6. 12, 14.
Acts 19. 40.
1. Cor. 6. 1, 2,
 3, &c.

understand some and the chief of the church, a church in a church. For when it commonly signifyeth a multitude with relation to religion, the church-governours set over the flock by Christ, assembled to heare and determine matters that may fall out amongst the faithfull, is not unfitly nor obscurely called the *church*. And those things are rightly said to be brought to the church which are brought to them that guide the church by the authority and appointment of Christ. As the body is said to see, when the eyes alone see; so the church is said to heare that which they only do heare who are the eares of the church. Not that the guides are substitutes of the multitude in that respect; for the eye is not the deputy of the hand or foot: but that the power which they have received, they have received it from Christ for the whole body, and must execute it to the good and profit of the whole. They are the stewards, deputies, ministers of Christ, but for the whole body and every member thereof. From all this it is apparent, that the word *church* in this text of scripture cannot be taken as it is commonly in other passages of the new Testament. For in other texts it noteth the multitude of believers, without distinction of sex, age, or condition: but here women and children are excluded, as regularly incapable of that power here spoken of. In other places *the church* signifyeth a multitude of believers, saints, faithfull, or disciples, as they are distinguished from their officers and guides, which are set as stewards in the Lords family and

*Acts 11. 26. &
14. 23.
Robins. A-
gainst Bern.
pag. 126, 127.*

officers in his corporation : but here the officers of the church are necessarily included. If the word must be interpreted according to the circumstances of the text and the matter intreated of, the matter here insisted upon is no where else touched in all the new Testament (for here and no where else is a rule left by Christ how offenders are to be dealt withall, and by whom the sentence is to be determined) and if the matter be peculiar, it is no marvell if the words be taken in a sense restrained. The Syriack interpreter useth three words to expresse the greek ἐκκλησία. First, *בְּנוֹשָׁה*, *Synagogue* or *Assembly*, which is used for the Hebrew, *עֵדָה*, & *קָהָל*, in the old Testament; and for *συναγωγή* & *συνέδριον* in the new. But Matth. 10. 17. he translateth *συνέδρια* *בְּתֵי רִיבָה* which Tremellius rendreth, *in Concilia* ; Boderian, *in domum judiciorum*; De Dieu, *in domum judicium*. For as among the Hebrewes *בְּתֵי רִין*, so among the Syrians *בְּתֵי רִיבָה*, is *συνέδριον*, and put for *κρίσιον*, James 2. 6. & *ἀκροατήριον*, Acts 25. 23. The second word is *בְּנוֹשָׁה* *congregatio*, Acts 19. 32, 39, 40. and is used in the old Testament for *עֵדָה*, when it signifieth the assembly of Judges, Psal. 82. 1. and in the new for *συνέδριον*, Acts 5. 27. and 6. 12. and 23. 1, 20, 28. In other passages they translate it *עֵדָה*, Matth. 16. 18. & 18. 17. Acts 2. 47. & 5. 11. & 8. 1, 3. & 9. 31. Rom. 16. 1, 4, 5, &c. which they use for *עֵדָה*, Psal. 7. 8. & 74. 2. & for *קָהָל*, Psal. 22. 26, 27. & 35. 12. & 40. 10. & 89. 6. & 149. 1. The Arabick Interpreter useth foure words in the new Testament :

Acts 7. 38.

Psal. 22. 17.

Ps. 88. 31. &

106. 17, 18.

Psal. 1. 5.

Psal. 22. 23. &

26. 5.

Jam. 2. 2.

Matth. 10. 17.

Matth. 5. 22.

Acts 6. 15.

Judg. 5. 10.

fit in judge-

ment, Sept.

עֵדָה טַב כְּרִימ-

פִּי.

ment : First of all *Gambon* ; Acts 19. 31, 39. which in the old Testament they use for עֵדָה, Psal. 35. 18. & 74. 2. Psal. 1. 5. & 82. 1. & קָהָל, Psal. 22. 26. & 26. 5. & 149. 1. & in the new for συναγωγη, Matth. 10. 17. Jam. 2. 2. & συνέδριον, Acts 6. 12. The second, *Gamahaton* ; Acts 7. 38. & 11. 22. & 15. 3. Rom. 16. 4, 5, 16. 1. Cor. 1. 2, &c. which is used in the old Testament for עֵדָה, Psal. 22. 17. even when it signifieth an assembly of princes, elders or judges. Num. 35. 12, 24, 25. & 27. 1, 2. & 36. 1. & for קָהָל, Psal. 22. 23. & 68. 27. and in the new Testament for συνέδριον, Matth. 5. 22. The third, *Kanifaton* ; Rom. 16. 1. Acts 11. 26. & 12. 1, 5. & 13. 1. & 15. 4, 22. 1. Cor. 14. 19, 33. & in the Revelation every where. The fourth, *Bihaton* ; Matth. 16. 18. & 18. 17. Acts 2. 47. & 5. 11. & 8. 1. & 14. 27. & 18. 22. & 20. 17. 1. Cor. 6. 4. & 11. 16. Ephes. 1. 22. & 3. 10. which is put for קָהָל, Psal. 40. 10. In the Arabick Pentateuch they put *Gawkon*, for קָהָל, Deut. 23. 1, 2, 3. & 31. 30. Lev. 4. 14. which word is not found in the new Testament. The Ethiopick interpreter, Matth. 18. 17. for, *Tell the church*, hath, *domui Christianorum*, and so Matth. 16. 18. *domum Christianorum meorum*, as De Dieu observeth : And if all these things be laid together, it will appear, the words used by the Syriack and Arabick Interpreters will easily admit the former interpretation. And if we compare one text of scripture with another, when the church spoken of in this passage of Matthew hath power to heare

See Philem.

1. 2.

Phil. 4. 5.

Heb. 2. 12.

Col. 1. 18, 24.

and

and determine controversies, and censure offenders by publick authority, which agreeth to no spirituall society which hath not received power ministeriall from Christ to preach the Gospel, and receive unto and debarre from the sacraments by publick authority; it cannot be that the community of the faithfull in any particular society should be understood by *the church*, seeing Christ the Lord of the church hath not communicated power to them to do such things themselves, nor to deliver it over to the governours to have such things done in their name, but hath immediately given power to his officers and ministers to do such acts or service in his name for the good and benefit of the society, and as it may stand with respect to the honour, and estate which Christ hath put upon the society, as his flock and people.

Object. 4.
Robins. A-
gainst Bern.
Pag. 170.

Two scriptures are so plain, clear, evident, and perspicuous for excommunication, the former Matth. 18. 15, 16, 17. for the order and degrees of proceeding, the other 1. Cor. 5. 4. for the persons interestted in the businesse, as that to bring in other scriptures for the expounding of them, is in truth as needlesse and lost a labour as to light the sunne and moon a candle. They among whom the fornication was, out of the midst of whom he was to be put, and which were puffed up when they had rather cause of sorrowing, to them the Apostle writeth, them he reproveth, they were to be gathered together for the excommunicating, purging out and judging of the offender, vers. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. And therefore the duty here enjoined

as

as well concerneth the brethren as the officers, except we will say the fornicatour was onely among and in the midst of the officers, and to be put from among them, and left among the people still, and that the officers onely were puffed up when they should have sorrowed, and not the brethren with them. It concerned the people as well as the priests, in the type and shadow, to put away leaven out of their houses, and to keep the passeover with unleavened bread; and so in the truth and substance, to purge and put out this leaven Paul speaketh of, namely the incestuous person, vers. 6, 7. The Apostle admonisheth them that they were not to be commingled with fornicatours, nor to eat with them, vers. 9, 10, 11. and this duty as well concerned the people as the officers. They with whom Paul dealeth are commanded to put the wicked man from among themselves, vers. 13. So that the same persons from among whom he is to be put are to put him away, which are both officers and people. They whom the Apostle by his letter made sory for their failing in the casting out of the incestuous man, and that with sorrow to repentance, manifested with great indignation and zeal, they were to reprove and censure him, and so did for his reformation and their own clearing: which, that it was not the case of the officers alone, but of the brethren with them, appeareth in these scriptures, 1. Cor. 5. 1, 2. with 2. Cor. 2. 5, 6. & 7. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. Paul writeth not onely to the officers, but to the brethren as well as to them, to forgive or loose, to comfort or confirm their love toward the same person upon his

repentance, 2. Cor. 2. 7, 8. therein plainly witnessing, that the brethren as well as the officers had bound, rebuked, and manifested their indignation against the sinne and the person for it. The conclusion inferred is, That the rule prescribed by Christ, Matth. 18. and the practice of the same rule by Paul, 1. Cor. 5. do severally and joyntly couple and combine together the elders and the people in the censuring of an offender; the officers going before, the brethren following in their order, and the women lastly by silent consent: wherein the scriptures distinguish them from the men, 1. Cor. 14. 34. 1. Tim. 2. 12.

*Robins. A-
gainst Bern.
pag. 242, 243.*

Answ.

But this conclusion fighteth with it self, reacheth not to the point in hand, followeth not from the premisses, if understood according to the Authors meaning. It is crosse to it self: for if women may not authoritatively excommunicate, then every one two or three amongst whom the fornicatour was, whom the Apostle reproveth because he was not cast out, whom he admonisheth not to be commingled with fornicatours, whom he made sorry for their failing, and to whom he writeth to loose & forgive him, &c. had not equall power with the officers to cast him out, or to forgive him. For all these things were written to the church of Corinth, to the women as well as the men, unles we shall say the incestuous person must be left among them, or they might company with fornicatours, &c. In scripture they are distinguished from men, it is said, & therefore in some cases that which is said to the whole congregation doth not equally concern

cern every one in the congregation, but in their order. And if women be not comprehended in those exhortations and rebukes as equall to the brethren, we cannot say the brethren are comprehended as equal to the officers. But each thing must be expounded according to the nature of the argument, and conference of other scriptures. In generall the whole society may be blamed when every particular member is not in fault: as here we may well think, some in Corinth mourned, and endeavoured to have the incestuous person removed (who else should inform the Apostle; now far absent, of this abuse and their grosse security?) but could not prevail: and yet the Apostle rebuketh the whole society. And the same may be observed in the Prophets; they rebuke the common sinnes of many as if all had corrupted their wayes. Again, the Apostle might rebuke the whole society, that he was not cast out, when yet the authority to cast him out pertained to some onely. Some he might rebuke, because they were puffed up and did not sorrow, nor admonish governours to do their office: others, because they did not cast him out, or rebuke him earnestly to bring him to repentance. Both the brethren and the officers might be remisse, the one to stirre up by grief and just indignation, the others to do the duties of their place; and so both sorts worthily incurre rebuke. So he might admonish them all not to be commingled with fornicatours, but every one according to his place: not the brethren, by private familiarity and conversing; not the guides,

1. Cor. 9.

1. Cor. 5. 9.

Συναγα-
γνῆς signifi-
cat familiarem
conversatio-
nem cum fra-
tribus.

by their remissenesse, suffering him to abide in the society whom they ought to expell and cast out. He might decree and command, that when they were assembled together in the name of Christ, they should deliver him to Satan, some by their authority derived from Christ, whereunto the rest must give free and willing consent. It pertained unto them all to endeavour his casting forth, but to every man in his order: to the officers, to cast him forth by their authority; to the faithfull, by admonition, sorrow, free consent, and just indignation, if upon rebuke he did not testifie repentance. It concerned the people as well as the priests to put away leaven out of their houses, and so every man was to put leaven out of his own house, and every Christian man and woman is to purge sinne out of their hearts, and do their endeavour to reform others: But if this be applied to the purging and casting forth of the incestuous man, then it must be remembred, that similitudes hold not in every thing: For otherwise every particular man and woman in Corinth, being a member of that society, had authority of himself actually to thrust out the incestuous person, which is directly contrary to the Apostles admonition. For when they were assembled together in the name of Christ, the Apostle willeth them to deliver up to Satan him that had done that wicked deed. He designeth none other authour of this sentence but the Lord Jesus Christ, in whose name, that is, by whose authority and commandment received from him, he would have it to be administered.

nistred. For nothing can be done prosperously in the church unlesse all things we undertake be ordered according to the prescript of the chief and supreme Lawgiver. But God never gave authority to every particular believer, two or three, to thrust every notorious offender out of the congregation, as he charged every master of a family to put away leaven out of his house. By *the power of Christ* is understood the incommunicable power or virtue of Christ, whereby he worketh powerfully by his Spirit in the ministry of the word, and confirmeth the sentence of the church rightly pronounced, according to his promise; That virtue or efficacious power by which he is with his church to the end of the world, and promiseth to be in the midst of two or three that should be so gathered together in his name. And Paul encourageth the Corinthians to minister the discipline of excommunication upon the incestuous man, arming them thereunto by the mighty presence of Christ, by which it should be made effectuell. Or if by *the power of Christ* we understand both that which is proper to Christ and that which is communicated to his officers for the good and benefit of the church (which is lesse probable) yet there is no syllable, that this power is given immediately to the whole community, and from them derived to the officers; much lesse, that it is given originally and *executive* both to a small company of believers without officers. For the Apostle speaketh not of the power but of the execution of that power which God hath given, and that by a church completely

Matth. 28.

19, 20.

*Luke 24. 49.**Acts 1. 5, 8.*

furnished with officers for that purpose. The principall cause of that casting forth was the power, that is, the commandment and authority, of Christ, who is the authour of ecclesiasticall power; the near cause, the commandment of the Apostle, *Let him be delivered to Satan*; the next cause, the authority of the governours to whom Christ hath committed the care of his flock. But as the authority of Christ doth not take away the judgement of the Apostle, nor the judgement of the Apostle the authority of the governours, no more doth the authority of the governours the due regard and respect which must be had of the people in the execution of that dreadfull sentence. To this purpose is the distinction of a twofold excommunication or power of the keyes used by Divines: The first *concionalis, per modum doctrinae*, which is the first part of the power of the keyes; and so the pastour alone may excommunicate the impenitent according to the commandment of Christ: The second *judicialis, per modum sententiae*, which is not in the power of every pastour, but of the church, *sc.* of the rulers or officers in respect of authority derived, but to be exercised with due regard had to the communitie, as the flock and sheep of Christ. When the Apostle writeth to the Corinthians in behalf of the incestuous person, to confirm their love towards him, he

2. Cor. 2. 8.

Κυρωσιν significat non tam, comprobare,

quàm, cum autoritate discernere, & legitimè rem transfigere, ut ratum & authenticum sit quod actum fuerit. It cometh from κύριος, authoritie, whence also cometh κύριος, a lord, or one having authority. Chemnit: Exam: part. 4. De indulgent. pag. 89. Significat κυρῶν, communibus quasi suffragiis & publicâ autoritate aliquid comprobare, confirmare, ratum facere & habere.

faith

saith it is sufficient that he had been rebuked of many; thereby understanding, not the whole society, but the chief or governours to whom the care of ecclesiasticall discipline was committed. And if the congregation was freely and deliberately to consent to his excommunication, the authority of many was sufficient for his rebuke, by whom it was performed, to whom belonged the authority of binding and loosing ministerially. It is true the word *many* is now and then put for *all*, when the subject matter requirerh it be so understood; but there is no reason so to take it in this passage: and if all had received authority immediately to rebuke by way of censure and ministerially, we can give no reason why the Apostle should not rather have said, *of all*, then, *of many*. The question then is not, whether all due regard should be had of the congregation or church in a matter of such weight and importance before the governours proceed to the sentence of excommunication; but whether the power of excommunication and exercise thereof be primarily in the people, and from them derived to the ministers: which is not proved by this nor any other text of scripture.

Two or three met together in the name of Christ are the church that hath power to excommunicate: But that agreeth to the whole community, and not to the officers alone. Moreover, the power of excommunication is an essentiall property, one of the keyes of the kingdome, and as necessary as the power to receive in members, without

Object. 5.
Matth. 18. 19.

Robins. A-
gainst Bern.
pag. 227.

without which a church cannot be gathered or consist.

Answ.

Every society consisting of two or three believers met together to pray is not that church which hath power to excommunicate : for then in many Christian congregations, and in divers families, there should be many churches invested with this authority. No one example can be alledged out of scripture or ecclesiasticall story of the ancient church, in which the multitude of the faithfull, no guides or officers moderating the action, did lawfully excommunicate or judge (as the Apostle speaketh) any member of the society. No promise can be shewed in holy writ wherein any such authority is bequeathed to two or three private believers, disciples or brethren. The sentence of excommunication is to be concluded and denounced by men met together in the name of Christ, that is, by the commandment and authority of Christ, and with the power of Christ : but it will never be proved, that Christ hath authorized two or three Christian people, without officers or guides, to meet in his name, and by his power to denounce that grave and fearfull sentence. The church, to whom this power pertaineth, is an assembly gathered in the name and by the power of Christ for such a purpose, which agreeth to them onely who have received power from Christ to do that service, and not to every society, nor to every one in any complete society of believers. And thus the words of our Saviour must be expounded, if they have such reference

rence to the precedent matter. But they may contain a reason drawn from the lesse to the greater, thus, If Christ be present with two or three gathered together in his name to ask things agreeable to his will, he will much more confirm in heaven whatsoever his officers and servants assembled in his name shall determine and conclude, and what sentence they shall denounce upon mature deliberation according to his will. If we speak of complete churches, such as the Apostles planted, it hath power of excommunication, which is one part of the power of the keys: but the execution of that power is not essentiall to the church, either constitutively, or consecutively: It is neither the matter nor form of the church, nor that which doth necessarily flow from them as an inseparable property. The moderate use of excommunication is necessary to the well-being of a church: but there may be a true church where there is no discipline of excommunication, and where that censure is not put in practice. He may be a good physician who never used section; a good chirurgian, who hath no saw; and the body sound which never suffered the cutting off of a member. The conclusion is, That all spirituall power is immediately derived from Christ, to be exercised by his direction and appointment for the good and benefit of the whole church. The power of preaching the word authoritatively, and administration of the sacraments, pertaineth to the Pastours and Teachers onely; which power they have received from Christ, & must exercise for the edification of

the flock. The power of excommunication *formaliter & executivè* is proper to the company or assembly of guides and rulers in the church, derived from Christ, to be exercised as Christ shall go before them, but with the notice of and due regard had unto the whole society.

CHAP. XIII.

*An examination of sundry positions laid down by
M^r Jacob in his Exposition of the second com-
mandment, tending to Separation.*

TO know the true sense and meaning, the just scope and purpose of the second commandment, is of continuall and necessary use; and rightly conceived, might be a means of unity and peace amongst brethren in matters of worship. In this regard M^r Jacob (as he saith) compiled a brief exposition of that commandment, and with a mind desirous to maintein and keep the people of God within the bounds of truth and peace. I purpose a brief, plain and modest examination of his exposition in some particulars, concerning the speciall object of the commandment, and positions, taken by some to be just grounds of Separation.

*To the Christi-
an reader.*

*Exposit. the 7.
and last rule.*

By the second commandment we stand bound to embrace all the instituted holy doctrines, means and ordinances, both inward and outward, appointed of God to bring us life: to believe that we have (to bring us to eternall life) a Mediatour and Saviour given us, and that he is a Priest, Pro-
phet

phet and King: These things are not in the first, but in the second commandment, although they be inward actions of the mind and inward worship.

This is a private conceit, affirmed without ground or reason to support it, crosse to the commandment and Mr Jacob himself. Contrary to the commandment: for the first commandment enjoineth us to take the true Jehovah to be our God, as in covenant he hath bound himself unto his Israel: But God is not our God in covenant but in and through a Mediatour: And therefore the first commandment bindeth us to take the true God in and through a Mediatour, that is, Jesus Christ, to be our God. Mr Jacob holdeth the tables of the law to be the Lords testimony and covenant, wherein all duties whatsoever, even the Evangelicall, as faith, hope, and repentance, are commanded. But in the covenant of grace, in what commandment the Lord hath bound us to know, believe, hope or call upon him, in the same he hath obliged us to know him in Christ, to believe in him through Christ, and to call upon him in and through a Mediatour. For God in Christ, or God and Christ, is the object of Christian religion: and since the fall of Adam there is no throne erected unto which man can come, no way prepared, no liberty granted for man to come, no good successe to be expected, but in the name of a Mediatour. It is impossible to conceive, how Christians should believe that God is, or that he is a rewarder of them that seek him diligently, but according to

Ans.

*Exposit. the 1.
rule.
Exod. 31. 18.
& 32. 15, 16.
Deut. 9. 9, 10,
11, 15.*

his covenant of mercy ; how they should believe in his free grace and mercy for the remission of sinnes , but in and through Jesus Christ our onely Saviour. The selfsame precept which bindeth Christians to take the true God to be their God, King , Father, Judge and Saviour, bindeth them also to take Jesus Christ to be their sole Mediatour, Redeemer, Saviour, King and Priest and Prophet. Not to believe in or worship Jesus Christ, is a breach of the first commandment : so the profession of Turcisme is against the first commandment. To believe in or pray unto Angels or Saints departed as mediators, is a breach of the first commandment. All honour and service whatsoever, inward or outward, which is due unto God by virtue of the first commandment, it must be done unto God in and through Jesus Christ : and not to give that honour unto Jesus Christ , or to give it unto any other, is a breach of the first commandment. It is true, that inward and outward worship both, when they are both of one nature or kind , are required in the first precept : as, if I must pray unto God in the mediation of Jesus Christ , or pray unto Jesus Christ mine onely Saviour , I may kneel or prostrate my self, or bow my body in the exercise of religion ; and these actions must be referred to the same commandment. It is also true, that the second commandment reacheth to the heart, and requireth that we rightly conceive of, allow, approve and affect the ordinances of instituted worship appointed of God as well as exercise and maintein it : but seeing the
worship

worship it self commanded is instituted, it is also outward. Besides, there be some things of mere institution which pertain to the third and fourth commandments: as the institution and observation of the seventh day from the creation, in time of the Law, and of the first day in the week, in time of the Gospel. Mr Jacob himself saith, *The fourth commandment (in the word, Sabbath) setteth down one particular, even the ordinary seventh day of rest, but understandeth all holy dayes instituted of God, that they are likewise to be sanctified.* By his own confession then all instituted doctrines and ordinances are not referred to the second commandment.

Exposit. the 1. rule.

The just and true generall matter of the second commandment is, a free and voluntary institution (or matter instituted) onely or specially in the exercise of Gods worship, wherein it hath no way any necessary use of it self. This is the generall matter or full extent of the second commandment, even in the mind and purpose of God himself the authour of it: And it is likewise the just and full definition of Gods instituted worship in generall, that is, whether true or false.

Exposit. the 3. part, tit. The exposit. of the second commandment.

This is obscure and doubtfull. If the meaning be, that all instituted or positive worship of God which carrieth the Lords stamp and approbation must be referred to this commandment, and that all worship devised by men, for nature, use and end one with the worship instituted of God, is a breach of the second commandment, it will be granted freely, and might have been delivered plainly. But if the meaning be, that all free and

Answ.

voluntary institutions whatsoever must be referred to the second commandment, if of God, as just and allowable, if of men, as sinfull, it hath no ground of truth or probability. For many free institutions cannot be referred to the second commandment: and concerning the instituted worship of God, God hath left many things undetermined, wherein the church may take order and give direction without sinne, unto what commandment soever in generall the things may be referred. The Lord forbidding to bow down unto or serve an image, doth therein forbid all approbation, liking or reverence, though never so small, shewed towards any institutions and inventions of men, set up in the room of or matched with the Lords own instituted worship: But an invention for nature and use one with the true worship of God, and an institution in the exercise of religion are not one and the same.

*Exposit. the
third part, tit.
The exposit. of
the second
commandment.*

There ought to be very clear and plain proof in Gods word to warrant every visible church, if the members thereof desire to have comfort to their own souls; because this is even the first and weightiest matter in religion that can concern us, viz. to be assured that we are in a true visible and ministeriall church of Christ: For out of a true visible church ordinarily there is no salvation; and by a true visible church (and not otherwise ordinarily) we come to learn the way of life. Therefore above all things it is necessary that every Christian do rightly discern of the divers kinds of outward ordinances in this behalf, chiefly of visible

visible churches; and withall to understand which kind or form thereof is the true visible church of Christ, or kingdome of heaven upon earth, which is the onely way, and in it the onely truth ordinarily leading to eternall life hereafter. For the true visible church of Christ is but onely one (questionlesse) in nature, form and constitution.

There are expresse and pregnant texts of scripture which shew what is the true visible church of God, whereunto Christians may and ought to joyn themselves in holy fellowship in the ordinances of worship: As, where the covenant of God is there is the people of God and the visible church: For communication and receiving the tables of the covenant is a certain signe of a people in covenant. For what is it to be the flock, sheep, or people of God, but to be in covenant with God, to be the church of God. The word maketh disciples to Christ: and the word given to a people is Gods covenanting with them; and the peoples receiving this word and professing their faith unto God, is their taking God to be their God. Those assemblies which have Christ for their Head, and the same also for their foundation, are the true visible churches of Christ. It is simply necessary, that the assemblies be laid upon Christ the foundation by faith: which being done, the remaining of what is forbidden, or the want of what is commanded, cannot put the assembly from the title and right of a church. For Christ is the foundation and head-corner-stone of the church. The form is coming unto Christ, and being

Answ.

*Ephes. 2. 12.
Rom. 9. 4.*

*Lev. 2. 13.
Deut. 29. 11.*

*Deut. 33. 3. &
26. 17.*

being builded upon him by faith; the matter is the people united and knit unto Christ, and so one unto another. Now where the matter and form of a church is there is a church. Every society or assembly professing the intire and true faith of Christ, and worshipping God with an holy worship, joyning together in prayer and thanksgiving, enjoying the right use of the sacraments, and keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, is the true church of Christ. The Gospel may be preached to Infidels; some supernaturall truths may be professed by hereticks; the use of the sacraments may be in adulterate churches: but the intire profession of all fundamentall articles of faith to be believed, and main precepts and morall laws for practice to be acknowledged, the dwelling of the truth amongst men, and the right use of the sacraments, which is ever joyned with true doctrine, and to be esteemed by it, is proper to them that be in covenant with God. The laws and statutes which God gave to Israel was the honour and ornament of that nation, a testimony that the Lord had separated them from all other people, even the Gentiles themselves being judges. *This is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the people. He gave his law unto Jacob, his statutes and ordinances unto Israel. Thou gavest them right judgements and true laws, ordinances and good commandments. Who received the lively oracles to give unto us. They have Moses and the Prophets.* Sound doctrine and intire profession of the truth is to be found in the church alone, and is contained

Deut. 4. 6.

Psal. 147. 19,

20.

Neh. 9. 13.

Acts 7. 38.

Luke 16. 29.

contained in the belly of the church as light in an house, whereby it may be discerned. *The law shall go forth of Sion*: it is not elsewhere to be found. *My word shall not depart out of the mouth of thy seed, &c.* The sacraments are seals of the covenant of grace, and Symboles or testimonies whereby the people of God are distinguished from all other nations. The sacraments when for substance they be rightly used are tokens and pledges of our admittance into and spirituall enterainment in the Lords family. *This is my covenant that I make with thee. Go teach all nations, and baptize them into the name of the Father, &c. Amend your lives, and be baptized.* The sacraments do necessarily presuppose a church constituted, unto which they are committed, as the oracles and ordinances of God unto Israel. Baptisme rightly used is within and not without the church: It is a seal of the covenant (which is the form of the church as some call it) to the faithfull and to their seed: It is the sacrament of initiation, whereby members are solemnly admixed into the body of Christ. To have Pastours which feed with spirituall knowledge and understanding, is a gift of matrimoniall love, which God vouchsafeth unto his church: *And I will give you Pastours according to mine own heart.* And though all that heare do not receive the love of the truth, yet where God giveth his word it is a signe that some in those places belong to the kingdome of heaven. The Apostles first gathered churches, and then ordained elders in every citie: So that it is

Isa. 2. 2, 3.

*Isa. 59. 21.
See John 8.*

*31.
2^d Cor. 5. 19.*

Gen. 17. 10,

11.

Exod. 12. 1, 2,

3.

Matth. 28.

19, 20.

Acts 2. 38.

ephes. 4. 4, 5.

Acts 2. 41.

Jer. 3. 15.

Psal. 48. 1.

Matth. 18. 20.

Ezek. 46. 10.
See Lavater
in Ezek.

Acts 2. 42.

Iosb. 24. 14.

Rom. 10. 14.

proper to the church to be fed and guided by true spirituall Pastours, who do both teach and blesse in the name of the Lord. The true worship of God is an inseparable and infallible mark of a people in covenant with God: For where Christ is there is his church: but Christ saith, *Where two or three are met together in my name, there am I in the midst among them.* This is the priviledge of the saints; that Christ, the prince of his people, is in the midst of them, and goeth in when they go in. And for certain, they are gathered in the name of Christ, who being lawfully called do assemble to worship God and call upon his name in the mediation of Jesus Christ. In times past the church was acknowledged by these signes; of continuance in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, and breaking of bread, and prayer, of true fear, intire service, holy profession, and religious prayer. The weightiest matter therefore in religion that concerneth a Christian, is to know God and Christ, to repent heartily and believe unfeignedly, which is ever accompanied with holinesse of conversation, if God give time and opportunity: because without these there is no salvation to men of age and discretion. It is a matter of weight and importance also, to know where and how God is to be worshipped, and the right use of his ordinances, as of prayer, and the sacraments; because otherwise we cannot know how to joyn our selves in holy communion with the people of God in the ordinances of worship, which is a necessary duty if God give opportunity.

tunity. But to know the externall order or constitution of a particular, ministeriall, politicall church, is not a matter of weight or importance, to be matched with either of the former. And if Mr Jacob comprehend all these things under the name of *the church*, his speech is false, deceitfull, and confused, because he distinguisheth not things that be of different kinds. If the latter, it is most inconsiderately spoken and weakly proved. For out of the catholick invisible church or society there is no salvation; but out of a particular, visible, ministeriall church salvation is to be had. Internall society with the members of Christ, and communion with Christ himself which is invisible, is necessary; externall not so. Christ is the Saviour of his body, and saved he cannot be by Christ that is not a live-member of his body. Noahs ark builded by Gods appointment for the safety of all such as were obedient to his preaching, was a type and figure of this onely holy catholick church, not of a visible, particular, ministeriall church: for as none of the sonnes of men besides such as entred into Noahs ark were saved from the deluge, so whosoever entred into the ark were saved from the deluge: And so Noahs ark was a type of that church into which whosoever entreth he shall be saved. But this cannot be affirmed of the visible church. Peter speaking of the ark, *wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water*, he saith, *The like figure whereunto, even baptisme, doth also now save us* (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a

Gen. 7. 11. &
8. 12.
Heb. 11. 8.

1. Pet. 3. 20,
21.

good conscience towards God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. His meaning is, that Noahs ark was a type of that church out of which there is no salvation, in which there is most certain salvation, and the waters by which such as entered into the ark were saved, a type of baptism. But of what baptism? Externall? No: Externall baptism and the ark of Noah were types of the same rank, both types and signes of that internall baptism which is wrought by the holy Ghost, by which we are incorporated into the body of Christ, and become more undoubtedly safe from the everlasting fire then such as entered Noahs ark were from the deluge of water. If the ark which Noah built did save all such from the deluge as entered into it, how much more shall that holy and catholick church which Christ hath built and sanctified by his most precious blood, give eternall life to all such as in this world become live-members of it. Such members they are made, not by becoming members of the visible church, but by internall grace or sanctification. There is not the same reason of externall and internall communion with the church. The inward is and was ever necessary, the externall necessary when it may be enjoyed. Some may be of the church in respect of the profession, participation of the ordinances and other inferiour privileges, who are not of the invisible church, that is, do not communicate in the most perfect work, force and effect of saving grace. And some that be not full members of the tree, orthodox and visible

visible church, may notwithstanding be found and live members of the mysticall body of Jesus Christ. For all that truly believe are in the state of salvation; and all that be in the state of salvation be members of that church out of which no salvation is to be hoped for or can be obtained, which doth comprehend all the faithfull and them that shall be saved. They are in act and in deed both in and of that church, and not in desire and wish onely; because they are actually in the state of salvation, the heirs apparent to everlasting blessednesse, actuall partakers of the benefits of Christs death which accompany salvation. They are given unto Christ, set into him as branches into a vine: and they that be such, be in deed and act, not in desire alone, members of Christs body. All that were not in the ark perished in the waters: No member doth live but that which is actually joyned to the head, and draweth life from it. Baptisme is the seal of our solemn admission into the church: but it is not the gate of our setting into Christ, but the seal of that admission we have received by grace & are partakers of by a lively faith. True believers the are in the state of grace, actuall members of the militant church, but of a visible, particular, ministerial church or congregation they may be members in desire onely. For it may so fall out many times, that he who is joyned to Christ by a true and lively faith hath not means and opportunity to unite himself unto a visible and ministeriall church. The *Catechumeni* who did truly ^{ually}, unfeignedly believe in Christ were

live-members of his mysticall body, and in respect of full, effectuall and saving participation of Christs benefits, actuall members of the church invisible, when in respect of solemn outward and sacramentall admission they were not members of any visible congregation. If a Christian be unjustly excommunicated, he still reteineth all those things which the best parts of the church have, inward or outward: and though he be cut off from the meetings and assemblies of particular churches, so that he may not bodily be present when the people meet together, yet still he hath the communion which onely is essentiall, and maketh a man to be of the church, in that he hath all those things which the best that remain not ejected have, as faith, hope, love and profession of the whole truth of God: He is the friend of God, an heir apparent of the new Jerusalem, a living member of the mysticall body of Christ: And if he be not cut off from Christ, from hope of salvation, and fellowship of the saints triumphant, neither can he be cast out from the fellowship of the church militant: for the church militant and triumphant is one. The performance of holy duties is an action of them that be already of the church, and doth not make a man of the church: yea, the performance of these duties is a thing of that nature, that by violence and unjust courses, holden by wicked men, we may be hindred from it without any fault of ours. Now that it often falleth out through the prevailing of factious, seditious and turbulent men, that the best part is unjustly and undeservingly cast out

*August. De
vera relig.
cap. 6.*

out of the visible church is a thing so plain and confessed that it needeth no proof. In times of grievous and hot persecution, under which the church hath laboured, the faithfull have been compelled to meet in woods, dens, and caves, some in one place, some in another, as opportunity was offered; their societies have been broken, and set congregations dispersed and scattered; when yet they continued the true church wherein salvation was to be had, and enjoyed the ordinary means of salvation. And if we speak of a visible ministeriall church, as it is here meant by you, the faithfull who professed the truth of the Gospel intirely, and did communicate in the ordinances of worship for the space of this fourteen hundred yeares and upward had not means, or at least did not unite themselves into a visible ministeriall church of Christ: And if out of this your church ordinarily there be no salvation, no means leading to everlasting life, the Christian world for these many hundred yeares hath wanted ordinary means to bring them to life and salvation, and been in that state in which no salvation ordinarily can be expected. If we detest the consequence as dreadful, not standing with the promises made to the church of the Gentiles and the tender mercies of God vouchsafed to his people, we must acknowledge the position from whence it followeth undeniably to be most rash and inconsiderate.

Out of doubt this kind of the visible church is now under the Gospel onely lawfull for us, even a particular ordinary congregation onely. And

what-

*Exposit. the
third part, ubi
supra.*

whatsoever kind or form of a visible church is instituted or ordained by men, the same is contained manifestly in the negative part of the second commandment, that is to say, it is simply unlawfull and by God himself here forbidden unto us.

Ans.

In the new Testament *the church* doth signifie a multitude of believers, whether assembled or dispersed: and whether they be met in one place or separated in place they retain the same name still. The church is a society of the faithfull, not an assembly, if we speak properly. When the word is put absolutely, it noteth the multitude or society of the faithfull, which is distinguished from their assembly or meeting together for the worship of God. For we shall reade, *the church of God* or *Christ*, and so *the church of the first-born*; but never, *the church of these* or *them*, or *you* or *us*, but *assembly* or *assembling of your selves*. Now the society may be one, when the congregations be divers in respect of place where they do assemble. It is not opposite to the unitie of an ecclesiasticall society, that the members should ordinarily assemble in divers places for the worshipping of God, so long as they be united by the same laws, have communion in the same ordinances, and be linked under the same spirituall guides and officers. When a church did comprehend a citie with its suburbs and the countrey circumjacent, I mean the believers who professed that faith within that circuit, it might well be that the number did so increase through the extraordinary blessing of God which did accompany the preaching of the word in those primitive times and

Heb. 12. 23.

Jam. 2 2.
Heb. 10. 23.

and first planting of that heavenly kingdome, that they could not well meet ordinarily in one place, and yet might and did continue one society. For when a number is gathered in small villages, or some added to the number already gathered, it is not meet they should be neglected because small, nor yet divided from the body because the number not competent to make an intire and perfect body of it self. The increase of churches doth require an increase of ministers, and if they grow to bignesse more then ordinary, an increase of places for their assembling, when the essence of the visible church is not changed, nor one multiplied or divided into many. And it is more available for the good of the church, and further removed from all ambition, if the society shall assemble in divers places as parts and members of one body, then to constitute a distinct free society consisting of some few believers, not fit to make up an intire body, contrary to the precedent examples of the apostles. In times of hot and grievous persecutions the churches of God could not assemble in any great numbers in publick places, but have been compelled to meet in dens, and caves, and woods, one and the same society in divers places, yet so as the society was not broken, though their meeting together in one place was interrupted. To meet together therefore in one place is not so essentiall to the church, but it may continue one in laws, ordinances, government and communion, though in respect of multitude, distance of places, and many other

occurrences they be constrained to assemble and hold their meeting severally. And that it was thus in the churches planted by the apostles, it is most probable. May we not well think that the Christian church at Jerusalem, for whom Christ had prayed particularly, to which some attribute the first miraculous conversion by Peters preaching, and amongst whom, being now ascended into glory, he did more abundantly display his power, and more conspicuously swallow up the scandal of his Crosse; which had the labour of all or many of the apostles for a time in it, whose care and industry we may guesse at by their ordination of Deacons, that they might not be distracted; whereunto much people did resort dayly, who though explicitly they did not believe in Christ, yet had they in them the faith of the Messias, and so were nearer to the kingdome of God then the common heathen; which was to send out light to all other churches, and be a common nursery to the world: May we not well think that this church did quickly rise to such bignesse that they could not well assemble in one congregation, as we call them? And the same may be said of other churches before mentioned. For at that time the regions were white even unto the harvest; the time was come when that heavenly kingdome was to be planted amongst all nations: and at the beginning God did reveal his arm more extraordinarily; and things which have their set period of growing do in their beginnings come on the fastest. And seeing

Acts 11. 19,
20. & 15. 2, 4,
6, 22, 23. &
16. 4. & 21.
18.

ing the apostles were extraordinarily furnished for the work, and had a great and wide doore set open unto them of God, seeing they were diligent and industrious in their work, and God was pleased mightily to accompany their endeavours, is it not more then conjecturall, that within short time the number of believers in those great and populous cities, with their suburbs and circumjacent villages, did exceed the capacity of one congregation? The officers also which the Apostles ordained for the use of those churches, were in number more then one ordinary congregation could bear, or were necessary for the service thereof, unlesse it were exceeding great, and could not long continue together with edification, but of necessity must assemble in severall places. It was not the apostles practice to ordain pastours in those places where as yet no sheep were to be seen or very few: and it had been inconvenient to tie the faithfull to one congregation, when by reason of multitude they could not meet in one place to their edification. What then remaineth, but that they might assemble in divers places, and yet hold communion in laws, ordinances, government and officers? When presbyters were first assigned to their particular cures, it is not certain. Eusebius reporteth, that many churches were gathered in Alexandria by Mark: But what he alledgeth out of Philo, as if it was to be understood of Christians, is misapplied by him. The first (as it is commonly received) that divided churches into parishes, and assigned presbyters distinctly to

*Hist. Ecccl. l. 2.
cap. 15, 16.
Rain. censur.
Apo. præl. 12.
Scalig. De E-
mend. temp.
lib. 6.*

Platin. in Eu-
arist. Onupbr
Pauvin. lib. De
Episc. tit. &
Diacon. Car-
din. & interpr.
vorum obscur.
Tituli, &c.
Euseb. Hist. l. 3
cap. 27. Ruff.
32, 33. Er. &
lib. 4. cap. 9.
Plin. epist. l.
10. ep. 97.
Tert. Apol. 2.
Polyd. Virg.
De invent.
l. 3. cap. 8.
Platin. in vit.
Dionys. &
Onupbr. An-
not. in Platin.
ibid.

take care of them, was Euaristus Bishop of Rome. But Platina reporteth this upon the credit of Damasus, and that supposititious: for the authour of the book carrying the title of Damasus was Anastasius Bibliothecarius, an Abbot of Rome, who lived about the yeare DCCCLVIII. And what probability is there, that under the reigne of Trajan, who moved the third persecution from Nero against the church, and that most violent, there should be place to divide parishes, and place singular presbyters over their peculiar charges? Some think with more probability, that Dionysius, who was bishop of Rome in the yeare of Christ 267. did ordain parishes, and commit them so ordained to Presbyters: For in his dayes the church had peace, Galienus by publick edict granting liberty. But if it be yielded that there were some parochi- all divisions about those times, they were not many, and within the city, and were but as cha- pells of ease, the church holding and continuing the same communion. And whensoever Presby- ters were assigned to their speciall cures, we may conceive the multitude of believers, though within the cities onely, necessarily required their assembling in divers places before. For though the number of Christians was sometimes greatly wasted with hot and fierie persecutions (as Pla- tina in vita Xisti. 1. who followed Alexan- der the successour of Euaristus, about the yeare of Christ 120. writeth by reason of the frequent slaughters there were few found at Rome which durst professe the name of Christ. And Onuphrius Annot.

in vit. Hig. faith, Although all Popes in those times suffered not martyrdom, yet they endured many things for the confession of Christ, of the raging common people and wicked magistrates, who retained perpetuall hatred against Christians) neverthelesse at other times the number of Christians did greatly increase ; as the Ecclesiasticall story noteth a most remarkable growth of the faith in the time of Fabian before Cornelius. Neither must we think that an Emperour, as Philippus, favouring the faith, did not bring on multitudes to the like profession. Cornelius reporteth, that in the church of Rome there were seaven Deacons, seaven Subdeacons, two and forty Acolyths, two and fifty Lectours, Porters, Exorcists, six and forty Presbyters, a thousand and five hundred widows, poore and sick : And from hence he doth amplify Novatus his pertinacy, that none of the numerous clergy nor yet of the people very great and innumerable could turn him or recall him. This was one visible ministeriall church, wherein all the members had union and communion together for the mutuall edifying and restoring one of another ; but it was too great and abundant ordinarily to assemble in one place. So that the church might remain one when the multitude was too great to meet in one place ordinarily, and when particular Presbyters were assigned to particular cures : For that was not a division of the society into societies distinct, but an assignement of some particular officer to the oversight of one part or branch of the society, for the more fit and com-

*Euseb. Hist.
lib. 6. cap. 36.
Gr. cap. 28.
Lat. 25. Ruff.*

*Euseb. Hist. l. 6.
cap. 31. Lat.
43. Gr. 33.
Ruff.*

modious government of the whole, as it was conceived: and they so attended that branch of the society or church, that their care and oversight reached to the whole. And out of doubt this form or kind of a visible and ministeriall church is much nearer to the patterns and precedents set by the apostles in the first plantation of Christian churches then that two three or few believers, uniting themselves in covenant, should be reputed the onely visible and ministeriall church, independent, from whom the officers should, as their servants, derive their authority. This kind or form of a visible church is so farre from being the onely lawfull and allowed form of a church in scripture, as if we speak of a church complete in respect of the inward substance and externall order, furnished for all duties and offices required of the church, it is not so much as warranted in scripture. To the constitution of a visible distinct society or church there is required, First, an intire profession of one and the same faith and holynesse, intire in all fundamentall articles of faith to be believed as necessary to salvation, and main precepts and morall laws for practice to be acknowledged. A lively operative faith maketh a man a true member of the church invisible; and the profession of faith and holynesse, a member of the church visible. Profession of Divine verities revealed in Christ, whom onely the companies and societies of Christians acknowledge to be the Sonne of God and Saviour of the world, doth distinguish Christians from Jews. The
intire

intire profession of faith, according to the rule left by Christ and his first disciples and scholars the holy apostles, doth separate the multitude of right-believing Christians, which is the sound part of the Christian church, from all seduced hereticall combinations. Secondly, there is required an union and communion in the true worship of God, and ordinances belonging thereunto, appointed of God himself, *sc.* prayer, administration of the sacraments, and dispensation of the word. But the time may fall out, that the preaching of the word may be omitted, and reading or meditation may possesse the place thereof, nay, mere desire conjoynd with manifold sighs. So the administration of the sacraments may be left off, as it was in the church of the Israelites for the space of fourty yeares in the wilderness. But though the being of a church is not absolutely destroyed by the want or omission of these exercises for a time, yet they are actions necessary to the well-being of a church, and such as flow from the very nature of a church if they be not hindred. Thirdly, there must be subjection to lawfull guides, officers, or pastours appointed, authorized and sanctified to lead and direct the flock in the happy wayes of eternall life. Companies of believers were gathered before elders were ordained amongst them, and the church may continue when guides are wanting (as in case they be taken away by death, persecution, banishment) but it is not complete or perfect without them, neither can it hold communion in many ordinances of worship, nor execute many offices which

which belong to the church consisting of all its parts. Fourthly, to the making up of an intire, visible, distinct society, orders, laws and discipline is required for the preventing of abuses and scandals, the preservation of the holy things of God from contempt, the recovery of them that fall, and suppression of prophanenesse. Discipline is needfull in every society, without which it cannot long continue but all things will run into confusion. It is necessary the members of the church should live Christianly, otherwise the profession of faith and administration of the holy things of God must needs be polluted. Discipline, put for the censures, hath no practice but in an united body or church, which must needs have a being before it can exercise its power: But the exercise of that power in a body complete is necessary, not simply to the being but to the well-being of the whole. As a city, so the church cannot be without those things which belong to the necessary being thereof: but it may be without those that belong unto her safety alone, though not so well. Fifthly, the members of a visible church must hold fellowship in faith and love, not onely one with another, but with all other visible churches, and all others intirely professing the faith of Christ and walking in holynesse, so farre as they hold communion with Jesus Christ. For all visible churches, though distinct societies, be sisters, one in profession, fundamentall laws and ordinances, and should be one in hearty love and affection: And no particular church can be called

or be the true church of Christ but as it holdeth union with the catholick. From the relation whereby Christ is referred to his members, these things flow, *sc.* That Christ doth expound to them his word for the food of eternall life, and doth hang seals to his word whereby he doth confirm and ratifie it. From the relation whereby the members of Christ are referred to him their Head, these things flow, That whosoever would be accounted for true members of Jesus Christ they must acknowledge and receive that food and those seals appointed by Divine institution. If the faithfull must assemble to heare the word of God, call upon his name, and receive the sacraments, then there must be some to preach the word, administer the sacraments, and blesse in the name of the Lord, and that by authority from God. If they must receive the word, and avouch themselves to be the people of God, then they must walk before him in holynesse, and maintein the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. If the temple of God must be kept from pollution, and the holy things of God from contempt, then there must be authority communicated from Christ to censure such as offend, to repell the notorious, to comfort the afflicted, and receive the penitent. If all promiscuously may not meddle with the dispensation of the holy things of God to that purpose, then there must be order for their election and admission into that office, and for the execution thereof being admitted thereunto. Where all these things are to be found purely, the church is excellent for

degree, pure and famous: Where any of these are wanting or impure, the church is so much defective or impure, though it may be pure in comparison of others. Wheresoever we see the word of God truly taught and professed in points fundamentall, and the sacraments for substance rightly administred, there is the true church of Christ, though the health and soundnesse of it may be crazed by many errors in doctrine, corruptions in the worship of God, and evils in the life and manners of men. Profession of the true faith alone in matters fundamentall, and holy prayer, with exhortation to obedience, is a mark of the true church, though the sacraments upon occasion be not there administred so that they be not neglected upon any contempt or erroneous conceit of their not being necessary. Where most of these notes are wanting or impure, the church is of lesse account, in dignity, excellency and credit coming short of others, according to the degrees of impurity in the marks, the deficiency of some marks, and the nature of the marks themselves in which the impurity is: As impurity in doctrine or administration of the sacraments is worse then disorder in matter of government onely. Therefore to the full complete constitution of a visible church many things are required, and that of divers kinds in themselves, and of divers degrees of necessity, all which cannot be referred to the second commandment; but many, and they most necessary, to the first; some to the third; some to all: And though

though in things essentiall and unchangeable, belonging to the being of the church, and matters positive determined by God, nothing must be done besides the rule; yet in things not determined, concerning externall order, and the better exercise of that authority which Christ hath committed to his servants, some things are permitted to the wisdom of the church, according to the generall rules of scripture. And if the church, holding the true faith, as it hath formerly been said, shall exceed or fall short in some particulars, for such superfluity or defect she is not to be rejected as no true visible church of Christ.

Every church-ministry made and devised by the policy of men, and not instituted of God, is against the second commandment, &c. And all offices and ministeries in the church which are found in the scripture as instituted by God, are in the affirmative part of this second commandment.

*Exposit. of the
second com-
mandment.*

The church-ministry, in respect of the main and substantiall duties belonging thereunto, doth pertain to the second commandment in part, not wholly or onely: but in respect of things circumstantiall annexed to the ministry, it belongeth not to the second commandment. And if we consult scripture, that is a new or devised ministry which for substance of the office is not of God, be the outward calling never so orderly or legall; and that ministry is not new or devised which for the substance of the office is of God, though the entrance was disordered in the person administering

Answ.

nistring many things be amisse, and in the execution many defects or superfluities. If a minister orderly chosen and ordained shall preach false and corrupt doctrine in points fundamentall, or administer false sacraments, his ministry is new, devised, false, notwithstanding his lawfull entrance. If a minister enter unlawfully, either by the tumult of the people, partiality of the overseers, or corruption of patrones, if he preach Christ crucified soundly, and rightly administer the sacraments, his ministry is true and of God, though his entrance be of men. If a minister preach sound doctrine in the main, though mixed with some errors, and administer the holy sacraments, though with some superstitious rites, his ministry is not to be esteemed new or devised for these weaknesses. If some things humane be mixed with Divine, a sound Christian must separate the one from the other, and not cast away what is of God, as a nullity, fruitlesse, unprofitable, defiled, because somewhat of men is annexed unto them. In the body we can distinguish betwixt the substance and the sicknesse which cleaveth unto it; betwixt the substance of a part and member, and some bunch or swelling, which is a deformity, but destroyeth not the nature of that part or member. Which of the prophets doth not cry out against the pride, oppression, covetousnesse, tyranny of the priests in the time of the law? Their offices were bought and sold; they themselves despised knowledge, opposed the prophets of the Lord, strengthened the hands of the wicked, and were enemies to all piety,

piety, and yet their ministry was not false and devised for the main substance of it. It is objected by the rigidest Separatists, with great confidence, *That to communicate in a false ministry, is certainly a breach of the second commandment. For what do they else but set up an idole, yea and bow down unto it, which serve God in and by a devised ministry?* But if first they would consider what a false or devised ministry is, and then what it is to communicate in the worship of God with them, they would soon forsake this sort, wherein they trust. For the ministry may be true and of God, when the election is disordered, and the person unmeet, and the execution maimed. If this be not granted, there was neither church nor sacrament nor ministry in the world for many hundred yeares: yea, if every superfluity or defect make a nullity of the ministry, they that think themselves the onely ministers will be found none at all; because they derive their authority from the community of the faithfull, it may be two or three onely united in covenant, which hath none authority to communicate it, as hath been proved before. For so we may reason as they do, That is no ministry which is derived from them and executed in their name who have none authority to give it. What is it to communicate in a false ministry? Is it to communicate in the worship of God with them whose calling is not in every respect appointed and approved of God? I might entreat them to look to their own standing before they accuse others, and justifie their own calling before they

*Cann. Necess.
of Reform.
cap. 1. S. 3.*

*Mic. 3. 11, 12.
Jer. 5. 31.*

*Isa. 56. 10.
Ezek. 44. 7, 8.*

John 2. 16.

seek to draw others from the communion of the church upon such pretenses. But if that be their meaning, the proposition is weak, it can neither stand alone nor be underfet with any props. For when the prophets prophesied lies, and the priests bare rule by their means, was their ministry true or false? When the priests were dumb dogs that could not bark, and greedy dogs that could never have enough, was their ministry true or false? When the priests bought and sold doves in the temple, or took upon them to provide doves and such like things for them that were to offer, was their ministry true or false? When the scribes and Pharisees corrupted the law by false glosses, taught for doctrine mens precepts, made the commandment of God of none effect by their traditions, and set themselves against Jesus Christ, was their ministry true or false? If true; then an ignorant, idle, prophane, idle ministry, which despiseth knowledge, opposeth godlinesse, prophaneth the holy things of God, corrupteth the law, polluteth his worship, strengtheneth the hands of the wicked, leadeth the blind out of the way, may be a true and lawfull ministry. If false, then to communicate in a false ministry is not a breach of the second commandment: For the true prophets forbad not the people to heare the priests, nor our Saviour his followers to communicate with the scribes and Pharisees in the worship of God. He charged them to beware of their leaven, to let them alone, because they were the blind leaders of the blind:

blind: but he never laid his commandment upon the faithfull, not to communicate with them in the worship of God. And therefore to communicate with ministers no better then Pharisees in the true worship of God, is neither a vain worship, nor an abetting of the party in his sin, nor to rebell against the Lord, nor to commit spirituall whoredome: but on the contrary, it is to worship God aright, to reverence his ordinances, to relie upon his grace, to hearken unto his voice, and submit unto his good pleasure. If their ministry was true in some respects and false in others, then the ministry is not absolutely false which in some respect is not pure as it ought and is to be desired; then also it is no sin to communicate in a false ministry in some respect, so farre, to wit, as it hath truth in it, and doth carry the stamp of God. The priests, scribes and Pharisees, were of the tribe of Levi, which was set apart for the ministry, yet might they be strangers, thieves, robbers, murderers, which the sheep of Christ will not heare, that is, follow or be led by them. For the ministers whom our Saviour chargeth as thieves and murderers, were of continuall succession of Levi and Aaron especially: and it is to be understood of them who teach false doctrine, and not of them who enter without a lawfull outward calling. And to enter by Christ the doore, teaching him alone to be the onely Saviour and Mediatour, is the note of a good shepherd. To heare them, is not simply to communicate with them in the ordinances of God,

God, which the godly and faithfull among the Jews might not refuse to do with the Scribes and Pharisees, who were thieves and robbers; but to receive their doctrine, and embrace their errors, which was evermore unlawfull. The thieves and murderers in the church of the Jews sprung up with them, and continued amongst them, and neither departed themselves nor were cast out by others that had authority. In the Christian church divers false teachers, ravening wolves, Antichrists, rose up, not from among the Heathen or Jews, but in and from themselves: whereof some went out from the church and separated themselves; others were cast out by excommunication, and delivered up unto Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme; others were tolerated in the church, either because their heresies were not so pernicious at the first, or the better side had not power to cast them out, or they preached fundamentall truths but of evil minds. These in respect of outward order were lawfully chosen or called, and yet false prophets, discovered by their doctrine not by their calling, and some of them continuing in the church, the faithfull are warned to beware of their errors that they be not infected by them, but not forbidden to partake at the ordinances of worship because they are present. And if we look into the Scriptures of the old and new Testament, we shall never find the prophets called true or false in respect of their outward calling, but in respect of their doctrine.

Acts 20. 25,
26, 27, 28, 29,
30, 31.

1. John 2. 19.

Tit. 3. 10.

1. Tim. 1. 20.

2. Thess. 2. 3, 4.
Phil. 2. 5.

doctrine. A man may have a lawfull outward calling to the ministry and yet be a false prophet, because he preacheth the lying visions of his own heart. But we shall never find him called a false prophet who teacheth the truth as he hath received it of God, because in some particular his calling might be excepted against. And seeing he that speaketh the truth to edification, exhortation, rebuke and comfort of Gods people, according to the command of God, is a true prophet, he that speaketh the dreams of his own heart is a false prophet: It were good, *if they in whose mouthes the chalenge of false prophets is rifest, would better weigh how they themselves exponnd and apply the scriptures in their writings or prophesyings, lest notwithstanding any outward church-state (or calling, as they pretend) they be deeper wounded by the rebound of their accusations this way then their adversaries.* For whosoever will be pleased to trie and examine the matter impartially, shall find their quotations of scripture to be many, impertinent, forced, wrested, miserably abused, without all fear or reverence. Let no man therefore be dismayed at their great confidence, big words, multitude of scripture-proofs, or pretended grounds from others whose principles they put in practice: for if they be particularly examined, they will either disclaim the cause, or put weapons into thy hands truly to fight against and put them to flight. But for the present I forbear to enter into particulars, because I desire the satisfaction of the more mode-

*Robins. Treat.
Of the lawfulness
&c. pag.
47.*

rate fort, who though they scruple communion in some particulars above handled, do yet dislike that totall Separation which others make, and that bitterneffe of spirit wherewith they prosecute their cause. The Lord in tender mercy look down upon his church, make up the breaches which sinne hath made, remove the stumbling-blocks and occasions of offense, recall such as are gone astray, cause his truth to shine more and more in our hearts, and teach them that fear his name to walk in love, and by an holy unblamable conversation in all things to approve the soundnesse of their faith and sincerity of their religion before all men, for the comfort of their souls, the edification of others, and the glory of his great name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

FINIS.

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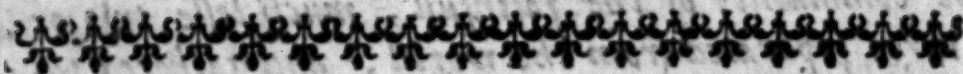
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Octob. 9. 1639.

Imprimatur Cantabrigiæ.

Ra. Brownrigg Procan.



FINIS.

